

**THE WORKING CONDITIONS, BENEFITS
AND RIGHTS OF DOMESTIC SERVANTS
IN ADDIS ABABA**



**Research Sponsored by Center For
Research Training and Information
for Women in Development
(CERTWID/IDR/AAU)**

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February 1995

Addis Ababa

CERTWID

M070

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 Statement of the Problem | 3 |
| 1.2 Objective of the Study | 4 |
| 1.3 Hypothesis | 5 |
| 1.4 Delimitation | 5 |
| 1.5 Definitions | 6 |
| 1.6 Literature Review | 9 |
| 1.7 Methodology | 18 |
| 1.8 Study Area and Population | 18 |
| 1.9 Sample Size | 20 |
| 1.10 Instruments for Obtaining Data | 20 |
| 1.11 Sampling Procedures | 21 |
| 1.12 Focus Group Discussions | 22 |
| 1.13 Data Analysis | 22 |
| CHAPTER TWO. BACKGROUND | 24 |
| SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY POPULATION | 24 |
| 2.1 Age and Educational Level of Domestics | 24 |
| 2.2 Place of Birth and Reasons to Migrate and Take up Domestic Service | 26 |
| 2.3 Duration of Activity and Marital Status | 32 |
| 2.4 The Type of Household Domestic Servants Want to be Employed in | 36 |
| CHAPTER THREE. WORKING CONDITIONS OF DOMESTICS | 39 |
| 3.1 Working Hours | 39 |
| 3.2 Types of Services Domestics Render | 41 |

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| 3.3 | Employers' Opinion Regarding Listing of Household Duties for Domestic | 43 |
| 3.4 | Attitude of Domestic's Parents and Employers Towards Domestic Service and Domestic Servants | 44 |
| 3.5 | Type of Employment and Preference | 46 |
| 3.6 | Employers Opinion About Employing Domestic with Children | 49 |
| 3.7 | Domestic Reason to Change a House and the Place they Stay During Laid-off | 50 |
| 3.8 | Duration to Get Another Employment and Duration to get a Substitute | 53 |
| 3.9 | Wages of Domestic Servants | 55 |
| 3.10 | Research Hypothesis | 60 |
| CHAPTER FOUR. SOME BENEFITS OF DOMESTIC SERVANTS | | 63 |
| 4.1 | Meals of Domestic | 63 |
| 4.2 | Lodging of Domestic | 66 |
| 4.3 | Opinion of Domestic Regarding Wage Fixation and Stipulation of Leaves | 68 |
| 4.4 | Day-off | 69 |
| 4.5 | The Education of Domestic | 73 |
| 4.6 | Presents and Holiday Benefits | 77 |
| CHAPTER FIVE. THE RIGHTS OF DOMESTIC SERVANTS | | 80 |
| 5.1 | Domestic's Opinion Regarding Forming a Union | 80 |
| 5.2 | Legal Provision and Places to Appeal | 81 |
| CHAPTER SIX. DOMESTICS' OPINION OF BEING A DOMESTIC | | 84 |
| 6.1 | The Benefits and Impacts of Domestic Service | 84 |
| 6.2 | Domestic's Future Plan | 85 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS | 87 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 99 |
| Appendixes | |
| Appendix A | 102 |
| Appendix B | 111 |
| Appendix C | 118 |
| Appendix D | 121 |
| Appendix E | 127 |
| Appendix F | 130 |
| Appendix G | 134 |
| Appendix H | 139 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | | page |
|-----|--|------|
| 1. | Percentage Distribution of Age of Domestic by Level of Education ----- | 25 |
| 2. | Domestics' Reason to Come to Addis Ababa: Distribution by Birth place ----- | 29 |
| 3. | Percentage Distribution of Respondents in Years of Experience and Marital Status----- | 33 |
| 4. | Distribution of Numbers of Children by Marital Status of Domestic----- | 35 |
| 5. | Order of Preference by the Type of Household Domestics Want to be Employed----- | 37 |
| 6. | Domestics' Daily Working Hours ----- | 39 |
| 7. | Type of Services Domestic Render ----- | 42 |
| 8. | Employers' Opinion Regarding Listing of Household Duties for Domestic ----- | 44 |
| 9. | Domestics' perception of the Attitude of their Parents and Employers Towards Domestic Service ----- | 45 |
| 10. | Type of Domestic Employment by Preference ----- | 48 |
| 11. | Employers' Willingness and Reasons Not to Employ Domestic with Children ----- | 49 |
| 12. | Reasons to change a House and Where to Stay When Laid- off ----- | 51 |
| 13. | Duration to Get Employment When Laid-off and Getting a Substitute ----- | 54 |
| 14. | Comparison of Initial and Current Salary of Domestic-- | 58 |
| 15. | Employer's Criteria in Fixing Domestic Servants' Salary ----- | 59 |
| 16. | Mean, Median and Mode of Current Salary of Sampled | |

| | | |
|-----|--|----|
| | Domestic Servants----- | 59 |
| 17. | Duration of Activity and Current Salary of Domesticities -- | 60 |
| 18. | The Meal Time and Quality of Food of Domesticities ----- | 64 |
| 19. | Sleeping Place and Materials for Domesticities----- | 67 |
| 20. | Domesticities' Opinions on Leaves and Minimum Wages by Educational Status --- | 68 |
| 21. | Domesticities' Day-off by Type of Employment ----- | 71 |
| 22. | Domesticities' Educational Activity by Their Level of Education----- | 74 |
| 23. | Reasons for Not Attending Classes by Type of Employment ----- | 77 |
| 24. | Domesticities' Access to presents and Working on Holidays ----- | 78 |
| 25. | Opinion of Domesticities Regarding Forming and Supporting Their Union ----- | 80 |
| 26. | Domesticities' Awareness of Legal Provisions and Places they Go to Get Legal Help ----- | 83 |
| 27. | Benefits Gained and the Impacts of Being a Domestic ----- | 84 |
| 28. | Domesticities' Future Plan ----- | 86 |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, we would like to express our most sincere gratitude to the Center for Research Training and Information for Women in Development (CERTWID) for funding this project, and to the Center's coordinator, Wz/o Almaz Eshete, for her assistance and patience.

We are grateful to Dr. Mekonnen Bishaw, ex-associate professor of the Addis Ababa University, for his professional encouragement and advice. We are also grateful to Ato Eshetu Gurumu for reading through our draft reports and for giving us constructive suggestions.

Special thanks also go to our assistant Mesfin Alebachew who was a resource in advising on practical strategies to take at the different phases of the study. He worked with us tirelessly, often under harsh conditions, to accomplish this project.

Finally, we would like to thank the respondents who agreed to answer our detailed questions. In the same manner, we are grateful to all the people, who gave us valuable information through the unstructured interviews, we conducted with them.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Both rural and urban women engage in domestic service. Women in rural areas are subject to hard work, famine and poverty. To escape from these problems many uneducated and unskilled women in the Third World migrate from rural areas to urban centres. These migrant women "are ready to accept any sort of work under any kind of conditions" (Enne and Peter, 1987:97). One of the jobs that migrant women are engaged in to support themselves is domestic service. As Enne and Peter (ibid: 49) report, "Seven out of ten migrants in the Philippines become servants... and 91 percent in Lima, Peru". Not only migrants but also urban-born women become domestic servants. Citing one of the causes, Enne and Peter, (ibid) say: "The inequality of urban incomes in the principal cities of the Third World has created a large market for domestic work. So "domestic service is an important employment sector in developing countries" (Herietta, 1988:85).

Research regarding domestic servants in Ethiopia is almost non-existent, but the service is an important area of employment for many families.

Since Ethiopia is a Third World country, rural women migrate to urban areas in search of a better life. Each year women migrate from drought stricken and poor harvest areas to urban centres to look for employment. Their migration is not only due to ecological factors, but also to escape from poverty and oppressive traditions of the society and village life, which has always imposed great hardships on them. Due to these reasons, the rural women of Ethiopia leave for the towns and the city in search of work, and the majority of them end up in being domestic servants. Besides migrants, a significant number of urban women, engage in this occupation. Many unskilled migrants and urban-born poor women engage in domestic service to support themselves and their families.

The emergence of towns in different administrative regions and the growing number of middle and upper class families have increased the demand for domestic servants and opened employment opportunity for many girls. In each middle and upper class households, we can find one or more domestic servants. Almost all women who are employed in governmental and non-governmental organisations, and the majority of housewives, and those who are involved in petty-trades such as preparing traditional beer (tella), the local spirit (araki), staple food (enjera) in the towns, employ one or more domestic servants. And this implies that domestic service is the main sector of employment for many girls in Ethiopia.

Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, is regarded by rural migrants as a place where plenty of job opportunities are found and where one can lead a better life. However, other than factory work or any secure job, domestic service is the main area of employment for migrant women. Therefore, many thousands of female servants are employed in many thousands of individual households in Addis Ababa. Meanwhile, there is no precise data about the total number of domestic servants in the city. This study, using the data collected from three Kebeles in Addis Ababa attempts to investigate the working conditions, benefits, and rights of domestic servants.

The paper begins with an introduction. In this section, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, the hypothesis, the delimitation of the study, definitions of terms, review of related literatures and the method of data collection techniques and analysis employed in this study are discussed. This is followed by the background of the study. Then the analysis section and cases are also incorporated to support the study. In the last section, the findings of the study are summarised and recommendations that follow from the findings of the study are made.

Copies of the questionnaires distributed to the randomly selected domestic servants and employers, and the life history of the sampled five domestics are attached in the annex part of this paper.

Statement of the Problem

Many working women, house wives, and others depend on domestic servants. Without a person that cares for their children and a servant for general household services, career women can hardly go to the office. As for housewives, the service domestic servants render is very essential. Without domestic servants, housewives would have limited extended family relationships, and can hardly celebrate traditional ceremonies with their extended family. Despite, there existed an attitude of contempt for domestic servants. The service domestics render is still not recognised by many people and they have no social dignity or respect, instead domestics are in a degrading position. Serabet and Gered are some of the humiliating Amharic words that domestics are abused.

Most of the time these domestic servants find themselves in a disadvantageous position. They face job insecurity and are ill-paid. They are also exposed to sexual abuse. There is no regulation which can protect domestic servants concerning their working hours, wages, medical benefits and rights. Therefore, they are intensely oppressed and demeaningly treated by their employers. Their working hours are unlimited (almost on call twenty - four hours a day), and they have no fixed minimum salary. These conditions would force them to leave domestic service and become unwed mothers, bar-ladies, prostitutes etc. And these causes many social problems. The condition of domestic servants will not improve unless the government pays attention to change the situation.

Even though domestic servants are large in number, they are ignored by social scientists and persons who are interested in doing research on gender issues. As a result, there is no adequate

research finding which indicates the conditions of women domestic servants in Ethiopia. In the discussions of women's issues, domestic servants are often left unmentioned. The ignored domestics, with their large numbers and high degree of invisibility, should get the attention of researchers. Our study is intended to make up for this omission.

To draw a clearly defined policy, a policy maker has to know all sectors, in which women are engaged and can be engaged in, including domestic service. Therefore, this study is intended to inform policy makers on some relevant issues such as female migration and women employment.

Domestic service is one of the major employment sectors which should be considered in the formulation of a well founded policy about women. Without focusing on domestic servants we think it is impossible to formulate a comprehensive policy regarding women in Ethiopia. The researchers of this paper want to draw the attention of policy makers towards the issue of domestics. Besides, there is a strong need for further research on this area as incomplete knowledge would make practical policy interventions difficult.

Objective of the Study

The main objectives of the study are:

- To assess factors that motivate deprived women to join the world of domestic service.
- To examine the working conditions of domestic servants
- To identify the benefits and rights of domestic servants
- To suggest some recommendations based on the results, and to identify some practical intervention measures to be taken by the government and other concerned bodies.

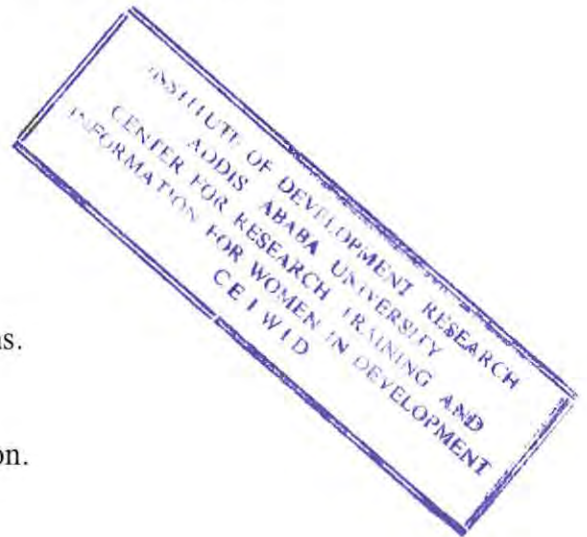
In the course of the study, other related issues such as attitudes and the legal status of domestics are raised. Knowing the attitudes of each group helps to find answers to questions such as how a domestic servant evaluates herself, her occupation, and how she feels about the other social

groups (in the home and outside). What do employers feel about their domestic servants? What attitudes do other people have towards domestic servants and domestic service? What influences have each attitude on the working conditions, benefits and rights of domestics? Do domestics have legal security in their job? The answers to such questions could either be positive, negative or neutral and the answers may help to know the social status of domestic servants.

Hypothesis

This study attempts to test the following hypotheses.

- Domestic servants have favourable working conditions.
- Domestic servants have benefits granted by law.
- Domestic servants have the right to have an association.



Delimitation

The study does not consider male domestic servants in terms of working conditions, benefits and rights. It rather focuses only on female domestic servants in the selected study sites.

Domestic servants are found in many rural and provincial towns. However, due to the broadness of the subject, it is beyond the researchers' capacity to make research on the overall conditions of domestic servants in Ethiopia. For such reasons, the research is limited to study the working conditions, benefits and rights of domestic servants in Addis Ababa. Even within the capital city, a limited number of Kebeles (localities) has been taken from three Highers (Woredas) by means of stratified sampling method. Thus, the result of the findings should be related to such groups only.

Definitions

1. Domestic Servant

The term domestic servant has been used for those who are employed in private households to perform household duties. The International Labour Office experts agreed with the definition that, "A domestic worker was a wage earner working in a household, under whatever method and period of remuneration, who may be employed by one or by several employers who receive no pecuniary gain from this work" (ILO, 1952: 249). The Kenyan Employment Ordinance (1962: 228) has also defined a domestic servant as:

Domestic servant includes any person employed either wholly or partially in any of the following capacities, namely cook, house servant, waiter, butler, children's nurse, valet, bar attendant, footman, chauffeur, groom, gardener, washerman, or watchman.

It is seen from the above definitions that the term domestic servant and the service they render are wide. And persons involved in the activity are both men and women who are employed in private households.

For the purpose of this study, domestic servant is used for those female domestic servants who are employed in private households to render specified services, namely, cooking, washing and cleaning, and taking care of children. Others who perform all-round duties or responsibilities for general household duties are also considered. To have a clear idea, the place of residence of domestics has to be mentioned. So, they are, "Sleep or live-in workers, whole day workers, half

day workers and part-time workers" Pat Ellis (1986: 43). And these can be categorised as live-in and live-out domestic servants. Those who reside with employers are called live-in domestic servants, and they get boarding and lodging services from their employers. Rohrllich-Leavitt (1975: 167) notes:

Servants are employed almost exclusively on a live-in basis, a pattern preferred by both servants and employers: by the former for the room and board received; and by the latter for the convenience of having the servant on call twenty four hours a day and for the increased ease of controlling the servants working activities.

Those who don't reside with employers are live-out domestic servants. Live-out domestics can be categorised into two groups; one group performs all-round household duties or specified tasks for those who have no domestic servant or for those who have one or more domestic servant(s) and earn their wage per month. The other group of live-out domestics work in different households and have to rush from house to house. Elizabeth Jelin (1977: 34) points out this as follows:

Some women live with their husband or children and provide part-time household services, such as washing clothes, windows, and floors, ...looking after children or the house, and helping out at parties and celebrations. They go to the employer's house, sometimes to seven different houses a week, and return at night to their own homes.

Live-out domestic servants also provide their services on contractual basis. These domestic servants are hired to perform household duties during feasts. The tasks they perform may be preparing local beer (tella), honey mead (tej), local spirit (araki) preparing spiced pepper, baking the staple food (enjera) or the traditional bread (diffo). Their payment may be on contractual,

hourly, or daily basis. Thus, a domestic servant is either a live-in or a live-out woman employed by private families to render household services for the family and in return get remuneration.

2. Working Condition

This refers to the domestic servants' daily hours of work the type of services and daily activities, type of employment, duration of activity, parents and employers perception of the occupation, the amount of wage domestic servants earn and the process of wage setting, job security, reasons to change employers, etc.

3. Benefit

This refers to payment made to the worker or her family either in cash or in kind. This payment is over and above the wage a worker is paid in return to her services. In short, "Fringe benefits can be defined as supplements to workers' ordinary wages that are of value to them and their families" (ILO, 1987: 70). Mostly it is meant to encourage, activate and/or compensate the worker in case of any dissatisfaction. It assumes many forms such as additional payment made on public and annual holidays, or leaves, or wages paid during sick leaves. Despite that domestic servants do not even get these benefits just mentioned, they have an enduring fear and worry about provisions for old-age. Cost services such as covering school and hospital fees, subsidise food, and enjoying some of their produce, bonus paid as per production increases, retirement payments are the main ones (ILO, 1987: 70-71). Besides the fringe benefits mentioned, the day-

off domestics get, the food they eat, the place and materials they use to sleep in, permission to attend classes, have given greater emphasis concerning the case of domestic servants' benefits.

4. Right

This refers to the right of association and the legal protection of domestic servants.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many anthropologists and writers on feminism and gender issues have shown concern about domestic servants, especially in the third world. To mention a few, Dawes (1973) has greatly explored the situation of domestic servants in England from 1850-1939. As the author notes, domestic service prospered in England in the early 1890's because of two main reasons - "economic necessity" of the poor and servants' acceptance of the occupation "as their lot in life to serve their betters" (p.9).

Dawes indicates that girls who were involved in domestic service were young, and their working hour was long while their wage was low, but perhaps they had one half day-off a week. Even at Christmas, domestic servants missed home life and shouldered the work load connected with Christmas fan fare which was much heavier than usual. However, in the early 1900s their day-off was improved. Furthermore, Dawes points out that domestics were treated unpleasantly and "were regarded as inferior beings" (p.9) and were the subject of jokes.

The author also shows how domestic servants were not free to change the house they were employed in. He says: "... Without a satisfactory written reference from the previous employer, a domestic servant stood no chance of finding another job" (p.12). The writer also points out that a servant who became pregnant would face a life long hardship.

Dawes also attempts to show that during "the Great Ages of servants... the supply was plentiful and their demands for wages and nights out were still moderate" (p.103). Furthermore, he indicates that some of the working conditions of domestic servants were improved during the Lily's times; nevertheless, the number of domestic servants had noticeably dropped from time to time and the supply was shrinking to meet the demand. However, as Dawes's explanation indicates, "... because of their position many female servants were forced to remain spinsters all their lives because they had little or no free time or opportunity to meet young men. Their devotion to their masters lasted to the grave" (p.30).

The author attempts to show how "Biblical texts were used in Victorian Times as a form of propaganda or indoctrination" (p.46) to maintain the then existing subordination of domestics.

As Dawes points out, "Girls were taken into domestic service schools in London between the ages of thirteen and fifteen and trained for two years" (p.110). Furthermore, that, "A committee of ladies was set up after the 1914-18 war to advise the Minister of Reconstruction... on how best

to deal with the "domestic service problem" ...and proposed different solutions to be implemented.

In relation to the history of domestic servants' organisation, the author shows the efforts made to establish trade union of domestic servants, efforts which started as long ago as 1872 and led to the founding of a union in the early 1880s. "But the union, never attracted a large membership" (p.150).

Ellis (1986) notes the low status of domestic service and domestic servants in the Caribbean. Ellis reveals that domestic service, "is assigned a negative and often demeaning status in the hierarchy of work roles" (p.14). She also notes the reasons for domestic service being given a degrading status in the Caribbean society and the reasons women predominate in this activity. Ellis explains why domestics earn low wages and find themselves in the state of oppressive and highly exploitative conditions. Furthermore, she identifies the types of domestic servants in the Caribbean and the duties they perform which range from all-round work to "specialised services such as child care and ironing" (p.43). She also points out that domestic servants particularly residents, render the longest hours of service. Ellis's study indicates that domestic servants in the Caribbean were in a legal vacuum; they "...are given no protection against sickness, maternity and old age disabilities" with no stipulated or formally accepted minimum wage for them. Rather "wages and other conditions of work were a private affair and "benefits to the worker, if any, depend on the generosity of the individual employers" (p.43). Lastly, she points out that as time went on a minimum wage and the working hours of domestic servants has been legally stipulated.

The migration of Latin American Women from rural to urban areas and their occupational and domestic alternatives in the cities is discussed in the book, "Women and National Development: The complexities of Change" (1977). The book tries to point out the main characteristics of rural to urban migration in the continent. It also addresses questions about the productive role of migrant women in the cities, especially their role in domestic service. The study points out that domestics can be fired with ease and can enter or leave the occupation at various times during their life time (p.33). Furthermore, the study indicates that domestic service is available for those who wanted to be employed as long as they do not fall ill or retire. The book also attempts to show the importance of domestic service for the upkeep of women, and the urban labour market. The book notes that due to the nature of the work "domestic service is in itself a dead-end occupation" (p.137).

Gleen, in the book, "The Worth of Women's Work: A Qualitative Synthesis" (1988) categorises domestic servants among Japanese-American Women as residential and non residential. Furthermore, she says that non-residential domestic servants are full time workers attached to one employer and doing all-round work for a monthly wage. The others were full and half day domestic servants who were earning their salary on an hourly basis. Furthermore, she points out the character of domestic work as monotonous, fragmented, mindless, of excessive pace, and socially isolating. She also points out that domestic servants were excluded from social security schemes and do not receive minimum wages and benefits "accorded to organised workers" (p.63). The author further notes that the wage of domestic servants varied from employer to

employer because of various reasons such as the economic status of employers and "the balance of labour supply and demand" (p.63). Gleen further explains that disagreement appears between employers and employees not at a starting salary but at a raise. Due to this, domestic servants look for "a new job at a higher wages instead of asking a raise in the house they were employed in" (p.74).

In the same book, "The Worth of Women's Work: A Qualitative Synthesis" (1988), Romero discusses about the Chicana domestic servant. Romero indicates that girls before marriage worked on a live-in basis, and on non-residential basis after marriage. According to Romero, domestic servants in Chicana remained in service "until they retired or health problems emerged" (p.81). Romero's study indicates that domestic servants in Chicana, except those very few who get paid vacation because they had worked several years for the same employer, have no benefits. Romero further indicates that domestic service is not "a bridge occupation"; that domestic servants "don't move upwards in the formal sector", but "horizontal mobility" can make significant difference in the quality of domestic's life.

Jelin (1990), indicates as when domestic servants get a day-off and where they spend it. Furthermore, she points out that women who were once domestic servants were unable to go back to their previous employment after they passed the age of 40, at which time they may have "a considerable number of children no one wants to employ (them) as a domestic servant" (p.39). Jelin also attempts to show that domestic service, as one of the informal sectors of employment has some differences from the rest of the informal sectors.

Domestic service is an important employment sector in developing countries Moore (1988). Moore points out that "more has not been written about this sector". Furthermore, she discusses "the history of the development of domestic service in different contexts" and attempts to show its class nature.

Almost all-domestic servants in Lima, Peru, were migrants from other areas of the country. And the majority of them were from "agricultural, poorly educated families" (Smith, 1975: 163). Smith observes that "very little number of domestic servants have completed formal education and continued beyond primary education" (p.165). The author also discusses the conditions that bring young women to Lima; the majority moves to the city willingly while a few came against their wishes. Furthermore, the study points out that almost all domestics were employed as live-in servants, an arrangement preferred by both parties (p.167). As indicated in the study, upon arrival in Lima, would be domestic servant will stay with her relatives or friends for a few months; after acculturation to the city life, she seeks employment with "low salary and few fringe benefits". Then, after a few months or a year, a servant who has got the job training on household chores, moves on to a better job with a higher salary and fringe benefits" (p.167). This helps the domestic to improve her position within the servant hierarchy as she passes from one job to the chores, moves on to a better job with a higher salary and fringe benefits" (p.167). This helps the domestic to improve her position within the servant hierarchy as she passes from one job to the next" (p.168). Furthermore, the study indicates, "the more experienced ones ... ask for raises of salary and fringe benefits, especially permission to attend school" (p.169).

Smith's study has also indicated the servants' attitude toward their occupation, and the employers' attitude toward the servants. Lastly, the study points out the factors stimulating or inhibiting changes in the situation of domestic servants in Lima. These changes are at the individual level, for employee and employer participants, at the level of urban institution of servitude, and the national level. Here, the role of the government in changing the situation of domestic servants is given great emphasis.

In Amann and Amann (1987), the causes of women migration are discussed. The fact that the number of female migrants to the city is greater than men as "migrant women are ready to accept any sort of work under any kind of conditions", and that "they do the jobs identified as" servants, prostitutes, factory workers, etc. is indicated in the above study.

In another study entitled, "Casual Work: Life Must Go On" domestic service is discussed as one of the categories of female employment in the urban areas, and the majority of women migrants became domestic servants.

"Women dropout of domestic service after a number of years, but due to a continuous influx of young females there is no problem in constantly replenishing the supply" (Young, 1981). In three minor sections in Young's article, young women without dependants, women with dependants, and older women without dependants are discussed. In addition to this, the study points out some of the informal sectors such as domestic service, retail trade, sewing, etc.

In the book "Patriarchy and Class: African Women in the Home and Workforce (1988), Cock points out the situation of domestic servants in South Africa. She notes that domestics are subject to intense oppression, which is evident in their low wages, long working hours and demeaning treatment by their white female employers (p.205). The writer of the article notes that "unlike other African workers, domestic servants are situated in a legal vacuum within the coercive structure" (p.206) as no laws stipulate their minimum wages, hours of work or other conditions of service. Cock points out that domestic servants lack disability and unemployment insurance, maternity benefits and paid sick leave and is vulnerable to instant dismissal by their employers (p.206). The author of the article discusses the racial domination of domestic servants and also indicates that women who are domestic servants have no option "but to acquiesce to low wages and appalling working conditions" (p.207). Cock explains the reasons that make domestic service unpopular, and says that none of the domestics enjoyed the occupation or derived any sense of fulfilment from it" (p.207). Lastly, the study points out that domestic servants shoulder most of the workload in the homes of the dominant class.

Few studies that concern themselves with the situation of women have been done in Ethiopia. However, most of the studies are not specific; they rather touch upon various issues in global manner. Because of this, studies that investigate the various aspects of domestic servants are very scarce in Ethiopia. Perhaps, one of the few works worth mentioning is Endalkachew Mengistu's study (1987). His study entitled, "The Legal Status of Domestic Servants in Ethiopia: the Law and Practice" attempts to narrate the history of domestic service in the world and in Ethiopia. Endalkachew notes that domestic servants in Ethiopia are excluded from the domain of the labour

law. However, the study indicates that domestics can be governed by the law of contract of employment in general, and by the special provisions on domestic servants included in the civil code in particular. But domestics did not know the existence of a legal provision for them. He further points out the deficiencies of the law relating to domestic servants in the Ethiopian civil code.

Million Desalegn (1973) has also conducted a research on domestic servants with particular reference to ladies who under went training at the Aware Community Center. Million attempts to show the minimum and maximum wage of the trained women, and the domestics' reasons for changing the household they were employed in. The researcher further discusses the working conditions, wage fixation and health condition of domestic servants. Million also notes, "the evaluation of the skills and efficiency of domestics by their employers". Lastly, the study makes some recommendations to help change the bad situation of domestic servants in the country.

Tsehai Berhane Selassie, in her report on "In search of Ethiopian women" touches upon the various issues of women in Ethiopia. She attempts to show the situation of domestic servants in Ethiopia. According to her report, in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s the employment opportunity for most women was domestic service. She reported "the double role" of a domestic who was employed in a bachelors' household. Furthermore, Tsehai mentions some of the services provided by young girls employed by Arada women (women who themselves were engaged in preparing and selling local beer (tella), honey mead (tej), local spirit (araki), staple food (enjera) and beverages).

Mesfin Messele (1985 E..C.) has conducted a research on "Domestic Servants and oral Poems". The result of the research was reported in Amharic. Mesfin attempts to show the types of domestic servants who are found in Amhara rural areas. He also mentions their duties, which range from household chores to farming activity. Mesfin notes some of the oral poems domestic servants recite while they grind cereals, collect wood or fetch water. The study also indicates how domestic servants express their deep feelings and grief in beautiful language and in oral poems.

Methodology

Study Area and Population

The data collected from the sites are classified on the basis of the following population (they are from different income groups).

- (a) Part of the samples was collected from Higher 17 **Kebele** (locality) 20. The inhabitants of this **kebele** (locality) are all well to do and can be called upper class groups. Some of them own small-scale industries, and large business enterprises; their high standard of living could be seen in the villas they have, and in the cars they drive. In this kebele, we found domestic servants employed in many households. These domestic servants consist of those who have a defined task (cleaning, cooking, looking after the children), and their pay, and boarding was far better than those who were employed in middle and lower class

groups. Most of these domestic servants employed by high income families are rated as well-experienced in the work they are engaged in. Domestic servants employed in the upper class groups have better working conditions and benefits compared to other domestic servants employed in other Kebeles (localities).

- (b) Other samples were also obtained from Higher 19 **kebele** 50 and the inhabitants in this kebele are classified middle class groups and economically less well-off compared to the former kebele (locality). The majority of the dwellers are civil servants and earn a good amount. There are also traders in this area who have employed domestic servants. Domestic servants who are employed in middle class households have better pay and working conditions than those who are employed in lower income groups.
- (c) The third sample was taken from **Higher 21 kebele** 23 which is inhabited by lower class groups who differ economically as well as in living standard from the above mentioned groups. The majority of the dwellers in this third sample are engaged in informal sectors such as petty-trade (**gulit**), local beer (**tella**), and local spirit (**araki**) producers. Some of the inhabitants are retired. All the same, some of the dwellers of the **kebele** employ domestic servants who come from different administrative regions with their own language, culture, and social attitude. Domestic servants who are employed in such low-income households are either newcomers or live-outs. Their pay is meagre. Here, live-in domestic servants get a barely furnished lodging and hardly enough boarding.

- (d) Samples are also collected from employers of each **kebele** who have employed domestic servants. We have also taken samples from brokers who are found in the above mentioned **kebeles**. Discussions are also held with some of the inhabitants of the **kebeles**.

Sample Size

The researchers listed by going from house to house of the brokers and the households who have domestic servants. We then sampled randomly 150 domestics and 150 employers, and 30 brokers and inhabitants of the **kebeles**. Once this was done, 148 (98.3%) domestics, 133 (about 90%) employers and 30 (100%) brokers and inhabitants were interviewed and the results of the research are based on these samples.

Instruments for Obtaining Data

The major instruments we used in obtaining reliable information are questionnaires, interviews, and discussions.

Information related to domestic servants was elicited by questioning informants. The questionnaires that we have employed are interconnected, open and close-ended questions. Using these instruments, we were able to gather demographic information such as sex, age, place of birth, educational level (background) and marital status. In addition to questionnaires, we used interviews and focus group discussions. We also compiled the life histories of five domestics for

a more intensive study. The discussions that we had with domestic servants, employers, inhabitants of the **kebele** and brokers have helped us to understand their thoughts, attitudes and feelings towards domestic service.

Finally, additional information was collected from secondary sources through intensive reading of related literature. In general, data collecting activities were carried out in the field as well as in the libraries.

Sampling Procedures

The sampling procedure started with a selection of the study sites. Then followed the pilot survey in the selected **kebeles** (localities). Based on the information that was obtained during the survey, three different types of questionnaires were designed. These questionnaires were meant for domestics, employers and brokers.

In order to test the clarity of each questionnaire, a pilot test was set up. This was conducted in the selected **kebeles** through friends, colleagues and domestic servants themselves.

Based on the suggestions that we got from different persons, we have revised and developed the questionnaires.

This was followed by the selection of enumerators that have high school education. Supervisors who have higher educational level were also chosen. The enumerators were selected from the

respective **kebeles** on the basis of their good conduct. This helped to create a smooth relationship and win the confidence of the local people. The enumerators and the supervisors were trained in how to register domestic servants from each household, and how to fill each questionnaire, approach and handle informants, and in their general responsibility during data collection. Households that we plan to take data were selected at random from each **kebele**.

Focus Group Discussions

Understanding the limitation of quantitative data obtained through structured questionnaires, we have also conducted a focus-group discussion to supplement our study with qualitative data. And in order to secure important but subtle information, a small sample of the study population was revisited and a free but in-depth discussion was conducted. The participants of the in-depth discussions were selected in such a way as to represent the major categories of the study population, namely domestics, employers, brokers and dwellers. Besides the discussions, we have also compiled the life history of five of the domestic servants in order to extract relevant information.

Data Analysis

The aggregate data was first put in a coded form and then fed into a computer. The analysis was accomplished using SPSS to generate diverse statistical parameters. Frequency runs were produced for all variables and this was utilised to select relevant variables for cross-tabulations. To establish relationships among variables and to compute row and column percentages, Chi-

square values and levels of significance were generated. Cross tabulations were made between dependent and independent variables. Moreover, a content analysis was made on the data gathered from the unscheduled interviews.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY POPULATION

In this part, following the results of the questionnaires, we present the classification of the 148 subjects studied, according to their reasons to come to Addis Ababa and take up domestic service. In addition, the following chapters discuss in depth the problems of domestics with a view to identify the ways of improving their status.

Most of the domestics were and want to be employed through a relative. However, mention should rightly be made here about the brokers who act as mediators in bringing employers and domestic servants together. And the brokers attend the bargaining on salary fixation and on the types of household activities domestic servants are expected to do. Some brokers have their own offices while others don't. These people get brokerage fee for their services from both parties (employers and employees). The amount of fee brokers get from their clients is mostly Birr 10, i.e Birr 5 from each party. Brokers are said to advice domestic servants to change employers fast so as to enable them get brokerage fee once again by employing a domestic in some other house. For this reason, most employers do not want to hire a domestic through a broker.

2.1 Age and Educational Level of Domestics

Regarding the age composition of the domestics, it was found that young girls comprise as high as 85.5% of the total domestics studied with age ranges of between 15 to 29. The age group 15 -

19 dominates taking up 39.9% of all the domestics followed by the age group 20-24, which stands at 30.5%. Only 14.2% of the domestic servants studied were 30 and above years of age (see table 1). This indicates that less percentage of adults is engaged in this activity.

Table 1

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF AGE OF DOMESTICS BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

| Age Group | Educational Level | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|-------------------|-------|-------------|-------|---------|-------|-----------|------|-------|--------|
| | Not started yet | | Non-formal* | | Primary | | Secondary | | Total | |
| | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % |
| 15-19 | 14 | 9.46 | 4 | 2.70 | 28 | 18.92 | 13 | 8.78 | 59 | 39.86 |
| 20-24 | 5 | 3.38 | 5 | 3.38 | 22 | 14.86 | 13 | 8.78 | 45 | 30.41 |
| 25-29 | 3 | 2.02 | 6 | 4.05 | 8 | 5.41 | 6 | 4.05 | 23 | 15.54 |
| 30+ | 3 | 2.02 | 9 | 6.08 | 4 | 2.70 | 5 | 3.38 | 21 | 14.19 |
| Total | 26 | 17.57 | 25 | 16.89 | 62 | 41.89 | 37 | 25 | 148 | 100.00 |

Mean age 25.38

Median 21.17

Mode 18.54

* Non-formal includes literacy campaign, traditional schools such as church and mosque.

The average mean age of domestics is computed at 25.38 years. This clearly shows that domestic activity is dominated by youth labourers. And the mode is calculated to be 18.54 years, i.e the number of domestics aged 21 years are more in number than those that are below or over

21 years. The mode and the median show that most of the domestic servants in Addis Ababa are young.

The illiteracy rate gets higher, compared to their relative number, between ages 15 and 19 (12.2%) and over 30 (8.1%). For the age bracket 20-24 and 25-29, it stands at 7.4% and 6.1%, respectively, while 27.7% and 23% of the domestics between the age brackets 15-19 and 20-24 had schooling, respectively. Domestics in these age groups (15-24) are found to be the most active in education and they indicate almost the same pattern of educational activity.

Out of the total, 17.6% of the respondents have no schooling while 16.2% have non-formal education. The remaining 66.2% had some schooling, where the majority (40.5%) being at the primary level (1-6), and 25.7% at the secondary level (7+).

2.2 Place of Birth and Reasons to migrate and Take up Domestic Service

The breakdown of respondents by birthplace and the corresponding level of education for different regions did not show any sizeable difference worth mentioning. However, some interesting observations were found on the regional constitution of the domestics. For example, Shewa, the region that includes Addis Ababa contributes the highest number of migrants (39.2%) who later become domestic servants. This reflects that the proximity to the city attracted many of the rural girls who live in the surroundings of Addis Ababa. This trend is followed by Wollo (16.2%), Gondar (10.8%), and Gojjam (8.8%). It is worth noting that of all the domestics in Addis Ababa, 75% came from only these four regions just mentioned. It is now evident that

domestics in Addis Ababa constitute mostly of migrant labour. Moreover, these regions are located in the central and northern parts of the country and are characterised by high population densities (CSA, 1991:7). The regions are also inflicted by drought. It can also be inferred that deprived women are less likely to start domestics in their home areas even though they are determined to become one elsewhere. This trend of becoming a domestic in places other than their home areas is a clear indicator of the feeling of humiliation of being a domestic. Striving to lessen the effect, or not to be held in contempt for becoming a domestic, most women preferred to come to Addis, a place that would allow them to hide themselves from their fellow countrymen.

Tigray is repeatedly stricken by drought (Mesfin Wolde Mariam, 1984:35-36) and large number of people from the area migrate to the urban centres and other areas not stricken by drought (Ibid:58). But the number of domestics from the given area is reported to be 3.4%. This may be due to the presence of an alternative city, Asmara, located not far from Tigray. However, this is not to say that all migrants always become domestic servants, but likely to be. Haregua, a 21 years old domestic servant, has a revealing history.

I was born in Eritrea, Seraye Awraja, (district) in a village named Ala-Gudent....

I am the eldest daughter for my parents. Now I have one brother and four sisters. My parents are farmers and own a small farmland from which they harvest maize, sorghum and other cereals. I stayed with them upto the age of 15. Six years ago, the area was stricken by drought and life was hard for our family. Fortunately, a domestic servant named Hiwot who was working in Addis Ababa came to visit her parents in my village. She told me about her occupation in Addis Ababa and convinced me to come to Addis Ababa and support my family by working in private houses. What she has told me pushed me to flee to this city - Addis Ababa. Then I told my idea to my parents and asked their permission.

They agreed with my idea and gave me Birr 120 for transportation, and I first went to Asmara where I boarded a plane to Addis Ababa. I came to this city looking for domestic work (see appendix H).

Domestics from Wellega, Arsi, Keffa and Sidamo are few in number. These regions were not exposed to drought and are known for their high cash crop production, and the people of the areas need not migrate to Addis Ababa. This may be the main reason why the number of domestics coming from these regions is less.

It is reported that no domestic has come from Gamogoffa, Bale, Harrarghe and Illubabor. This could possibly be attributed to the presence of neighbouring large towns such as Jimma, Nazareth and Diredawa with potential high demand for domestics. These towns are believed to be major destinations for migrants from western, southern, and eastern parts of Ethiopia. The other reason may be that the majority of the people who dwell in these regions lead pastoral life and may lack the information about the urban life and may not need to come to Addis Ababa.

Table 2

DOMESTICS' REASONS TO COME TO ADDIS ABABA: DISTRIBUTION BY BIRTH PLACE

| Reasons to come to Addis Ababa | Shewa | | Wollo | | Gondar | | Gojjam | | Addis Ababa | | Others* | | Total | |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|--------|------|-------------|-------|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % |
| Initiated by Relatives | 16 | 10.81 | 5 | 3.38 | 4 | 2.70 | 5 | 3.38 | - | - | 5 | 3.38 | 35 | 23.65 |
| Disagreement with family** | 1 | 0.68 | 4 | 2.70 | 3 | 2.03 | 1 | 0.68 | 1 | 0.68 | 3 | 2.03 | 13 | 8.78 |
| For self support | 24 | 16.23 | 6 | 4.05 | 4 | 2.70 | 3 | 2.03 | 15 | 10.14 | 9 | 6.08 | 61 | 41.23 |
| To visit relatives | 6 | 4.05 | 7 | 4.73 | 3 | 2.03 | 1 | 0.68 | - | - | - | - | 17 | 11.49 |
| Demonstration effect | 9 | 6.08 | 2 | 1.35 | 1 | 0.68 | 1 | 0.68 | - | - | - | - | 13 | 8.78 |
| Transfer | - | - | - | - | 1 | 0.68 | 2 | 1.35 | - | - | 1 | 0.68 | 4 | 2.70 |
| To get medical treatment | 2 | 1.35 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 0.68 | 3 | 2.03 |
| Not Reported | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 1.35 |
| Total | 58 | 39.19 | 24 | 16.22 | 16 | 10.81 | 13 | 8.78 | 16 | 10.81 | 19 | 12.84 | 148 | 100 |

* Other includes 3 (2%) from Arsi, 2 (1.4%) from Wellega, 1 (0.7%) from Keffa, 5 (3.4%) from Eritrea, 3 (2%) from Sidamo and 5 (3.4%) from Tigray.

** Either with their employers or their parents or husbands.

The reported causes that force domestics to be a domestic are not any different from their reasons given for coming to Addis Ababa. Therefore, the findings regarding reasons to come to Addis and to be engaged in this activity are almost the same.

Some 41.2% left their hometown for Addis to start life on their own. This implies that the majority of them go into domestic service to draw an income so as to support themselves and/ or their families. These women were left with no choice for many reasons, such as the death of their parents, or poverty, which makes it difficult to live together with their families. They may also want to flee the cultural practice of marriages arranged by parents. These unlucky ones seem to accept domestic service as a profession in its own right, and as a panacea to their hardships. This strong motivation to be independent coupled with lack of other opportunities, forces many migrants and deprived urban women to join domestic service. To illustrate this, we present Shitaye who explained the reason she left her village for and come to Addis Ababa:

In addition to my unlucky marriages, my mother passed away and my father got married to another woman. I disagreed with my stepmother, and hated living in the area. So, I decided to leave my village, and then I came to Addis Ababa to look for an employment - domestic service (see appendix G).

Girls such as Shitaye want to be independent partly because their parents were utterly poor and cannot send them to school.

Overall, 23.7% of the domestics were brought to Addis by their relatives who promised to send them to school. Others came with their relatives to live with them and get schooling. But due to

disagreement, or financial failure, many end up being domestic servants. Some 11.5% came here to visit their relatives and then failed to get the transport money to go back to their hometown or village. Demonstration effect accounted for 8.8% of those who were attracted by the dazzling city life. These latter ones were also looking for better economic opportunities. By demonstration effect we mean the impression that domestics had about being a domestic impression created by their senior domestics who returned to visit their hometown or village. They look more civilised and also talk much about the good things of the city. Countrywomen envied those who came to their village from Addis well clothed and looking beautiful. Besides, senior servants and others who visit their village told them about the presence of high job opportunity in Addis Ababa. Because of these, some came to Addis Ababa with the consent their parents, while others defected from their family and leave for the city. For some others (8.8%), disagreement with their family such as when forced to marry before they reach puberty is also a cause to leave their hometown or village. Married women who failed to give birth to a child are generally believed to be barren and this failure to give birth is solely attributed to the woman, and this situation, as believed traditionally, is not expected to come from the husband. Therefore, generally speaking, if a married woman happened to be barren, divorce is inevitable. Such a woman may also be insulted for being barren. These things may force them to leave their hometown or village. Or if a woman disagrees with either her husband for reasons other than being barren, or if she disagrees with her family, chances are that she would leave her village. These women leave their hometown not due to lack of economic opportunities, and therefore, don't seem to stay there even if economic opportunities are better in their village.

Few (2.7%) came to Addis together with their employers or relatives or husbands when they were transferred to Addis Ababa and some (2.1%) came to get better medication, but were absorbed by the city life. As gathered from table 2, transference and medication seemed to have less impact in pushing women into the world of domestics.

Except one, all the domestics born in Addis Ababa claimed to start this activity for self support (see table 2). This implies that many urban-born girls who are poor and have no alternative joined the world of domestic service to remedy the problems they encountered.

2.3 Duration of Activity and Marital Status

With regard to the number of years in domestic service, the majority (34.5%) of the respondents has worked as a domestic for six or more years. Out of this, 3.4% had more than 20 years of service (see table 3). This shows how difficult it is to get out of this activity once one joined it. This, therefore, implies that domestic service is a dead-end activity for many of the domestics. Wz/o Simegn Gabrie, 60 years of age, has a similar history. Simegn started the activity with Birr 6 per month 40 years ago as a live-in domestic servant. She is still working as a live-out domestic servant (see appendix E). A significant number (27.7%) of the respondents actually had two to three years of service in this activity, while 20% of the domestics had less than or equal to one year experience as a domestic. This indicates that fresh labour is flocking into this sector.

Table 3

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS IN YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
AND MARITAL STATUS

| Years of experience and marital status | No | % |
|--|-----|-------|
| Experience < 1 | 30 | 20.27 |
| 2-3 | 41 | 27.70 |
| 4-5 | 26 | 17.57 |
| 6+ | 51* | 34.46 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |
| Marital Status | | |
| Single | 125 | 84.46 |
| Married | 4 | 2.70 |
| Widowed** | 10 | 6.76 |
| Separated*** | 9 | 6.08 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |

* Out of this number 5(3.38%) domestics have 20 and more years of service

** Except one all the widowed domestics have children

*** Except one all separated domestics have children

The breakdown of domestics by marital status indicates that single women are the majority (84.5%). Widowed and separated domestics are almost equal in number to each other, 6.8% and 6.1%, respectively. Consequently, few women (2.7%) who find married life unbearable seek to earn their living through domestic service. Most, employers refuse to hire a woman with children. If a woman with children became a domestic, it would be only as a live-out. Another

observation is that separated and widowed women are more prone to be domestics than those currently married. That is why domestics who lost their husbands are higher in number than those that at present have husbands (see table 3). This situation of less number of married domestics compared to the number of widowed and separated domestics shows that married women are likely to be economically better-off than their widowed or separated counter-parts. On the other hand, due to many household responsibilities, married women may not have time to be employed as a live-in domestic servant.

Table 4

DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBERS OF CHILDREN BY MARITAL STATUS OF DOMESTICS*,

| Marital Status | Number of Children | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|-------|---|-------|---|-------|---|------|---|------|---|------|----|-------|
| | 1 | % | 2 | % | 3 | % | 4 | % | 5 | % | 6 | % | No | % |
| Married | 1 | 3.70 | 2 | 7.41 | - | - | 1 | 3.70 | - | - | - | - | 4 | 14.81 |
| Separated | 2 | 7.41 | 5 | 18.52 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 3.70 | 1 | - | 8 | 29.63 |
| Widowed | 2 | 7.41 | - | - | 3 | 11.11 | 1 | 3.70 | 1 | - | - | 3.70 | 8 | 29.63 |
| Single** | 7 | 25.93 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3.70 | - | - | 7 | 25.93 |
| Total | 12 | 44.44 | 7 | 25.93 | 3 | 11.11 | 2 | 7.41 | 1 | 3.70 | 7 | 3.70 | 27 | 100 |

* No domestics having more than six children is encountered

** 7 single domestics have children out of wedlock

Both separated and widowed women have more children than those who are married (see table 4). It is seen that divorce increases with the increase in the number of children women have.

There were seven single women who bore a child out of wedlock. Most of these single parents might have been sexually abused. This is illustrated by what Rahel encountered. Rahel told us that, the eldest son of her employers asked her to have sex with him. Whenever she refused, he beat her until her face was swollen. She was raped by the same boy and she became pregnant and delivered a child at the age of 17 (see appendix D).

Actually it is guessed that the total number of domestics who were sexually abused but do not conceive a child would be much more than seven. The majority (70.4%) of the domestics with children have between one (44.4%) and two (29.9%) children.

2.4 The Type of Household Domestic Servants Want to be Employed in.

When we come to the type of house domestics want to be employed, a couple's household is found out to be the most preferred (35.9%). Out of this, 23.3% made their first choice to couple's households. Meanwhile, 24.6% of the domestics do not bother about the type of house they are going to be employed. These ones give priority to the payment they are offered. This indicates that a significant number of domestics, many of whom may be beginners, do not choose the type of house they are going to be employed. A significant number (17.5%) of the domestics preferred to be employed in foreigners' household because here domestics may be able to collect much more money than they can make even from a well to do Ethiopian employer. It was observed that domestic servants' salary employed in foreigners' household range from 150 Birr to 300 Birr. A single female-led household is seemed to be even less preferred to working in single male-led households. Domestics, as the majority of them are youngsters, may be expected

to favour working in a single male-led households which actually was favoured by only 10.4%; the majority of these are expected to be one of those whose future plan is to marry (see table 28).

Table 5

ORDER OF PREFERENCE BY THE TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD DOMESTICS WANT TO BE EMPLOYED

| Type of household domestics want to be employed | Order of preference* | | | | | | | | | | Total | % |
|---|----------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|------------|------------|
| | 1 | % | 2 | % | 3 | % | 4 | % | 5 | % | | |
| Single (male) | 8 | 2.59 | 9 | 2.91 | 6 | 1.94 | 7 | 2.27 | 2 | 0.65 | 32 | 10.36 |
| Single (female) | 3 | 0.97 | 15 | 4.85 | 6 | 1.94 | 3 | 0.97 | 3 | 0.97 | 30 | 9.71 |
| Family | 72 | 23.30 | 29 | 9.39 | 8 | 2.59 | 2 | 0.65 | - | - | 111 | 35.92 |
| Foreigners' Residence | 27 | 8.74 | 18 | 5.83 | 4 | 1.29 | 3 | 0.97 | 2 | 0.65 | 54 | 17.48 |
| No preference (as lng as they pay me) | 32 | 10.36 | 20 | 6.47 | 12 | 3.88 | 6 | 1.94 | 6 | 1.94 | 76 | 24.60 |
| Others ** | 6 | 1.94 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6 | 1.94 |
| Total | 148 | 47.90 | 91 | 29.45 | 36 | 11.65 | 21 | 6.80 | 13 | 4.21 | 309 | 100 |

* This indicates order of choices of respondents

** Out of the 6,5 want to be employed only as live-out, one want to be employed in a hotel

To sum up, domestic servants in Addis Ababa are both rural and urban-born women. But it is found to be dominated by young migrants mostly from northern and central parts of the country.

Average age of domestic servants is 25 years.

Most domestics joined the world of domestic service for lack of any other alternative. The reasons range from limited job opportunity in other fields, inability to stay with their families due to financial constraints and unable to continue with their education. In addition, relatives that brought them from their hometown/village promising to accommodate and send them to school may break their promises. Some women also came to Addis for better medical services but failed to return home.

Domestics get employment through relatives and brokers. However, the preferred way of employment by both groups (employers and employees) was through relatives.

The majority (83.1%) of domestics were given some schooling. However, illiteracy was high among domestics of over 27 years.

Most domestics want to work in family-led households, and households led by single female were the least preferred.

Domestics may shift from employer to employer searching for better pay and working condition, but they are less likely to get out of it altogether.

CHAPTER THREE

WORKING CONDITIONS OF DOMESTICS

3.1 Working Hours

The majority of domestics in Addis Ababa seem to work for very long hours. Except for 2% (who work for less than 8 hours a day) and 9.5% (who did not report) the rest of the domestics (i.e about 88.5%) work for more than 8 hours a day. That means, almost one out of six domestics work for 17 or more hours a day. This is more than double the legal average daily working hours (i.e. 8 hours a day). This implies that domestics rise early and go to bed almost at midnight. Besides, four out of ten domestics work for 14 to 16 hours a day. It is only 8 out of hundred domestics that work for 8 to 10 hours a day (see table 6).

Table 6

DOMESTICS' DAILY WORKING HOURS

| Daily working hrs. | Number (No) | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| <8 | 3 | 2.03 |
| 8-10 | 12 | 8.11 |
| 11-13 | 39 | 26.35 |
| 14-16 | 58 | 39.19 |
| 17+ | 22 | 14.86 |
| Don't know | 14 | 9.46 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |
| Do you have lunch or rest break? | | |
| Yes | 111 | 75% |
| No | 37 | 25% |
| Total | 148 | 100 |

In effect, these working hours cover the time domestics are on call, i.e from the time they wake up early in the morning until they go to bed. In between, the majority (75%) takes rest like during meal hours. Most domestics reported that they woke up at 6:00 am and go to bed between 10 to 11 p.m.

Meanwhile, live-out domestic servants start work late in the morning and leave work usually before 6:30pm in the afternoon. It is the live-in domestic servants that work for long hours. And most do this without protest, at least in front of their employers.

As discussed in chapter two, this working for long hours is one of the reported major reasons that force domestics to change a house in search of another.

Long working hours create overwork on domestics and make them exhausted. These long working hours are not paid for; they are regarded as part of their obligation. Domestics have to get up early before their employers do in order to prepare breakfast, clean the house, and do any other household chores. At night they have to stay awake even after their employers fall asleep to wash dishes and utensils and prepare breakfast for the next morning.

Generally, domestics are required to work for whatever time if there is any work. When compared with factory workers, who have fixed working hours, domestics, especially the live-in ones, are required to do every domestic chores throughout the whole day. When considering the time they spend on duty, one can see how domestics are not fairly rewarded. And as indicated in chapter four, they are usually given only a maximum of 10 hours leave once a month or a fortnight.

3.2 Types of Services Domestic Workers Render

Asked about the services domestic workers rendered, the majority (64.8%) claimed to do all-round household duties, which are very tiresome. Those domestic workers who perform all-round tasks take care of all duties in the house, such as taking care of the children, cooking, cleaning and washing and ironing. The typical routines are illustrated by Rahel's description.

Usually in the morning, after I prepare breakfast I make coffee for my mistress before she leaves for work. Then I rush for my breakfast. In my typical work day, I make beds, clean the house and the surrounding, bake the staple food (enjera), wash clothes sometimes I prepare the stew (wot) when ever the mistress is staying out. Otherwise the mistress cooks the stew (wot) because her husband eats salt-free diet. I also assist in hoeing, weeding and watering the vegetables in the garden. (see appendix D).

Some domestic workers are hired to work as assistants in the petty-trades run by their employers. Almost all domestic workers who are employed by those engaged in the informal sectors (petty-trades) such as selling local beer (tella), baking of the staple food (enjera), distilling local spirit (araki), and other related retail trades are kept busy very late in the night even after both the last client and the employer have gone to bed. In such houses, bed time for domestic servants often is at midnight, or even later; but they are expected to get up early, at the usual time in the morning to start work. In such trades, servants are put to work with no day-off even for several months unless they have considerate employers. Rather they toil week-in and week-out and are chained by the strict supervision of their employers. They are kept on short rations, sleep on bare floors and are treated cruelly. Having worked thus, domestic workers earn very little. Domestic servants who work in such conditions and live in poor situations are usually exposed to illnesses. Even if domestic workers fall ill, they continue to work. This is illustrated by Rahel's experience:

I remember that one day the mistress bought 50 kilos of barley and ordered me to scour and roast it so as to prepare besso (a local food item of roasted barley flour).

When I started the work, I was vomiting continuously. Of course, being afraid of the mistress, I continued with my work. At lunchtime the mistress came home and gave me lunch, but I vomited after she left and I felt a severe stomachache. In spite of all this pain, I continued on scouring, roasting and pounding the barley and took it to the flourmill for grinding. That night I refused to eat dinner. The daughter of my mistress told her mother that I was ill. The next morning, the mistress gave me a traditional medicine prepared from Girawa leaves to drink before I took any food, thinking that the problem with me might be an ordinary stomachache. But this did not make my condition better.

Despite this, the mistress brought another 25 kilos of maize and ordered me to scour, and grind it. I did that too. After finishing this, I was told to wash all the clothes, including the sofa cover and the curtains. I also did that. Then another order came and that was to clean the entire house and I did this too. All these I did in only two days (see appendix D)".

Table 7

TYPE OF SERVICES DOMESTICS RENDER

| Service | No. | % |
|-------------------------|-----|-------|
| Taking care of children | 7 | 4.73 |
| Cooking | 31 | 20.95 |
| Cleaning and washing | 14 | 9.46 |
| All-round works | 96 | 64.86 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |

About 21% of all the domestics do only the cooking. Those employers who have more than one domestic, divide the household activities and assign their domestic servants to each type of duty.

The activities run by each domestic may include cleaning, washing, cooking and taking care of the children. Those who run the cooking or the washing activities could either be resident or non-resident domestic servants. Each domestic servant has to fulfil her tasks accordingly. Most

employers (80.5%) hire only a single domestic servant, either live-in or live out, to look after all the household duties (see table 11). Two or more domestic servants working in a single household is not common. Out of these, some 4.8% work only as baby-minders. Menbere, a 25 year-old girl noted how difficult taking care of a child is:

Working as a baby-minder is a very difficult job. I have no rest. I have to follow the child; I have to be vigilant, always fixing an eye on her. I have to run with her although I am tired. I have to hold her, although she is heavy. At night I have to remain awake until she falls asleep. Sometimes it is difficult to know what the small baby wants as she could not talk well; if I fail to understand her, she will scrap and slap my face and grab my hair and cry. If I happen to have a family emergency, I cannot be given leave, as it is only me who cares for her (see appendix E).

When we consider, other jobs, we find out that some 9.5% do only cleaning and washing tasks both of which are arduous. Domestic servants have to scrub floors and windows with their hand and feet. They also wash a lot of clothes by hand.

There are also employers, either single or family, who employ only a live-out domestic servant for all duties or for some other household activities which are tiring works.

3.3 Employers' Opinion Regarding Listing of Household Duties for Domestics

Most employers (71.4%) do not programme the daily or weekly duties of their domestics. This may be because most domestics are expected to work all round household duties believed important by their employers. It is for this reason that most domestics are on call 24 hours a day mainly to be instructed or assigned for any activity, when the need arises. About 28.6% of the employers claim to provide a fixed instruction on daily or weekly home activity (see table 8). However, even the domestics who are provided with fixed and scheduled instructions are required to do any other unscheduled work that may arise; of course, with no additional payment.

A conclusion, therefore, could rightly be made here that all the domestics are compelled to work every work they are ordered to even if it involves working for someone else the employer thinks fit. And there is no clear job description for the domestics. Needless to say, domestics are sometimes like purchased property that their masters put to any use they want.

Table 8

EMPLOYERS' OPINION REGARDING LISTING OF HOUSEHOLD DUTIES FOR DOMESTICS

| Programme & work schedule | No. | % |
|---|-----|-------|
| Is your servants' duty programmed? | | |
| Yes | 38 | 28.57 |
| No | 95 | 71.43 |
| Total | 133 | 100 |
| Should your servant work without any fixed schedule | | |
| Yes | 57 | 42.86 |
| No | 76 | 57.14 |
| Total | 133 | 100 |



When employers were asked whether domestics should work on unscheduled or unfixed duties, more than half (57.1%) of them believed this practice to be wrong while 42.9% of the employers said that every domestic should work without any fixed schedule. These latter ones seem to regard their domestic servants as their own property and want to exercise complete authority over their domestic servants.

3.4 Attitude of Domestics' Parents and Employers towards Domestic Service and Domestic Servants.

When asked about their families' reaction towards their engagement in the world of domestic service, the majority of the domestics (41.9%) reported that their families express regret to their

lot. The parents want their children to work in government offices or to lead married life as they regard domestic service as a degrading work. However, about 29.7% of the domestics are encouraged by their families to continue with this activity. This implies that most poor parents are satisfied at least to see their children feed and cloth themselves. Most of the time, their children support their parents out of the income they derive as domestics. About 9.5% of the domestics did not know their families' reaction towards the work they are involved in because they live far a way from them.

Table 9

DOMESTICS' PERCEPTION OF THEIR ATTITUDE OF PARENTS AND EMPLOYERS TOWARDS DOMESTIC SERVICE

| | No. | % |
|---|-----|-------|
| <u>Family reaction towards the work</u> | | |
| - Regret | 62 | 41.89 |
| - Encouraging | 44 | 29.73 |
| - Not available for comment | 14 | 9.46 |
| - I don't know | 28 | 18.92 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |
| <u>Employers' reaction towards the servants</u> | | |
| - Good treatment | 61 | 41.22 |
| - Ill-treatment | 12 | 8.11 |
| - I don't know | 75 | 50.68 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |

A reasonable percentage of the domestics (41.2%) claim to get good treatment from their employers, while 8.1% of the domestics reported that they are mistreated by their employers (mistreatment include scorn, nagging, etc). This shows that the majority of the domestics have

smooth relationships with their employers while half (50.7%) of the domestics do not know, or declined to tell their employers' attitude towards them-may be due to fear.

3.5 Type of Employment and Preference

According to table 10, 89.9% of the domestics are employed as live-in domestic servants. And this is found to be the most preferred form of employment by both employers and workers. The former want domestics to be on call any time they want them, and the latter favour to be live-in because most (89.2%) of them are migrants and have no shelter of their own; being a live-in domestic servant helps them to alleviate these problems (see table 2). It also helps them to save some of their minimum income, as they are provided with food and other essentials at their place of work. Being a live-in domestic servant is also said to help get better experience on domestic chores or all-round household activities. It also helps to build mutual confidence and better understanding between both parties.

Asked about their preferences on whether to be a live-in or live-out domestic, 81.8% want to be employed as live-in servants. The reasons given by most domestics (59.5%) for choosing to be a live-in was to avoid any expense that they would incur if they were a live-out domestic. Such costs include transportation costs to get to work, expenses on food and other necessities (as most live-out domestic servants are not given dinner and sometimes breakfast), house rent charges (as most of them are migrant women and have no relation to accommodate them). Other reasons forwarded by few (4.8%) for preferring live-in may be to be trusted by their employers as all live-in domestics spend all the day with their employers a situation that lessens suspicion of theft. Still for some (4.1%) to be a live-in domestic is regarded to help get better work experience on

all-round domestic chores. Others (4.1%) preferred to be live-in domestic to avoid hectic life i.e. so as not to rush from their home to their employers and then back home.

About 18.3% of the respondents want to be employed as live-out domestics. Out of this, 8.1% of them are currently employed as live-in domestics as they failed to find employment as live-outs. Most of those who preferred to be live-out domestic servants choose it because they have their own family. Due to this, they need time to take care of their children and run their own household duties when they return to their homes usually after 6 pm. Most, women with children want to be live-out domestics. Mean while, some (2.7%) prefer to be live-out domestics so as to avoid overwork as being a live-out may help domestics to run their own affairs outside of domestic service. All the currently live-out domestics are either married, or divorced and with a child. Having a child forces them to be live-out domestic servants.

Table 10

TYPE OF DOMESTIC EMPLOYMENT BY PREFERENCE

| | Present State of Employment | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|--------------|-------|-------|-------|
| | live -in | % | live -out | % | Total | |
| <u>Reasons of Preference</u> | | | | | | |
| <u>Why live - in</u> | | | | | | |
| - To avoid any expense | 88 | 59.46 | - | - | 88 | 59.46 |
| - To be trusted | 7 | 4.73 | - | - | 7 | 4.73 |
| - To get work experience | 6 | 4.05 | - | - | 6 | 4.05 |
| - Not to be in a hurry | 6 | 4.05 | - | - | 6 | 4.05 |
| - Not to depend on relatives | 8 | 5.41 | - | - | 8 | 5.41 |
| - Others* | 6 | 4.05 | - | - | 6 | 4.05 |
| Sub Total | 121 | 81.75 | - | - | 121 | 81.75 |
| <u>Why live-out</u> | | | | | | |
| - Have my own family | 3 | 2.03 | 13 | 8.78 | 16 | 10.81 |
| - Not to face workload | 4 | 2.70 | - | - | 4 | 2.70 |
| - Others** | 5 | 3.38 | 2 | 1.35 | 7 | 4.73 |
| Sub Total | 12 | 8.11 | 15 | 10.13 | 27 | 18.24 |
| Grand Total | 133 | 89.86 | 15 | 10.13 | 148 | 100 |

* This includes those who wanted to get a chance to attend classes (1.35%), consider as comfortable (0.68%), have no experience as a live-out (0.68%), don't mind (1.35%).

** This includes to be able to visit relatives (0.68%), to have time to care for their own family (1.35%), have no food and shelter problems (1.35%), to be respected (1.35%)

Most live-outs are willing to bear associated costs arising from being live-out domestic servants.

Most of these have their families' homes and they do not expend any money on house rent.

3.6 Employers' Opinion about Employing Domestics with Children

Asked on their willingness to hire a domestic who has a child, the majority (80.5%) of employers say they do not want to hire a servant with a child, while 17.3% of the employers are willing to employ a woman who has a child. The remaining 2.3% of the employers are indifferent and don't consider having a child or not as a factor in choosing a domestic.

Table 11

EMPLOYERS' WILLINGNESS AND REASONS NOT TO EMPLOY DOMESTICS WITH CHILDREN

| Employers willingness | No. | % |
|---|------------|------------|
| Are you willing to hire a domestic servant who has a child? | | |
| Yes | 23 | 17.29 |
| No | 107 | 80.45 |
| I don't mind | 3 | 2.26 |
| Total | 133 | 100 |
| Why are you not willing? | | |
| - A child reduces the domestics' efficiency | 58 | 54.21 |
| - Child may destroy household material | 3 | 2.80 |
| - I Cannot afford the expense | 28 | 26.17 |
| - Child may disturb me | 1 | 0.93 |
| - Child may disagree with my children | 17 | 15.89 |
| Total | 107 | 100 |

The main reasons given by those employers who are reluctant to employ a servant who mothers a child is that they think of these women as inefficient, since these mothers are thought to be

preoccupied with their children. This would of course undermine the performance of a given mother domestic. Other employers (26.2%) hate to hire a mother domestic to avoid extra expenses that they would incur if they were to employ a mother with a child. Some other employers (15.9%) fear that the child of the domestic may disturb and/or disagree with their children. About 3.7% fear that the child of a domestic may spoil their household materials.

3.7 Domestics' Reason to Change a House and the Place they Stay when Laid-off

Generally speaking, the majority (69.1%) of domestics leave their previous employers on their own accord. Only 12.8% of them are claimed to be fired from the house they were working in without their consent. There are employers who fire domestic servants after they make ready a substitute. Apparently, domestic service is characterised by a frequent shift from one house to another but not another field of activity. There were domestics who had worked in ten or more different houses. And also there were many domestics who work in this activity for more than 6 or so years. Most of the time servants would not ask a salary raise for fear that their request will result in disagreement with their employers. Due to this, changing a house is the only means for many domestics to increase their salary.

It is only 18.1% of the domestics that never change a house. As indicated in table 3, 20.3% of the domestics have a service of less or equal to one year. These are believed to be the ones that never change a house as they decide to get used to the city life and also to buy enough time to be well trained on domestic service before changing a house.

Table 12

REASONS TO CHANGE A HOUSE AND WHERE TO STAY WHEN LAID-OFF

| Reasons that push servants to change a house and where to stay | | |
|---|--------|-------|
| <u>Self Initiative</u> | 141 | 69.12 |
| - Employers' bad conduct | 67 | 32.84 |
| - Looking for a better salary | 33 | 16.18 |
| - Work-load | 22 | 10.78 |
| - Disagreement in payment | 5 | 2.45 |
| - Some other reasons* | 14 | 6.86 |
| <u>Employers' Initiative</u> | | |
| - Change servants with incompetency | 26 | 12.75 |
| - Without telling their reason | 10 | 4.90 |
| - Claimed not to need a servant at all due to inability to pay them | 6 | 2.94 |
| - Some other reasons** | 5 | 2.45 |
| - Never changed a house | 37 | 18.14 |
| Grand total | 204*** | 100 |
| <u>Where do you stay when laid-off?</u> | | |
| - Stay with relatives and/or friends or (with some acquaintances) | 89 | 80.18 |
| - Stay in own home | 14 | 12.61 |
| - Use your own saving | 6 | 5.41 |
| - Others**** | 2 | 1.80 |
| Total | 111 | 100 |

* This includes sexual harassment (1.47%), sickness (1.47%), employers transference to another place (1.96%), difference in religion (0.49%), went to visit relatives (1.47%)

** This includes pregnancy (0.98%), employees' bad conduct (0.98%), broke utensils (0.49%)

*** The figure appears higher than the sample size 148 due to the double counting of respondents giving more than one answer.

**** This includes begging (0.90%), stay around the churchyard (0.90%).

According to table 12, 32.8% of the domestics claim to leave the previous house they were working in due to their employers' bad conduct. Such bad conduct of employers cited by servants include, inability to provide sufficient food (1.5%), charge them for theft for what they did not steal (0.5%), some mistresses suspect their domestics of having an affair with their husbands (0.5%). Some other employers are reported to fail to treat the co-workers equally which forced the disfavoured domestic to leave.

Of those who left a house due to overwork (10.8%), most were working in large family houses or in a house visited by many guests. This also include those domestics who were employed by employers who ran a small business in their own home where local drinks and/or meals are prepared and sold. Houses that give many feasts also create workload on domestics forcing them to leave. Domestics working in such conditions think that they were not fairly rewarded, and are prompted to look for another employer.

Asked where they stay when laid-off until they get another job, the majority (80.2%) say they stay with their relatives and/or friends or with those they had some acquaintance with including previous employers and adopted mothers. Of course, as reported before, in addition to domestics who have parents in Addis Ababa, the majority of domestics have relatives who live in the city, even if they are migrants from other towns or rural areas. Those who do not have relatives may have adopted mothers. Some relatives may not be any better economically than the laid-off domestic servants. Therefore, laid-off domestic servants have to supplement the income of their hosts from the money they have already saved, if there is any. If they can not assist financially, laid-off domestic servants have to help in household chores.

As most domestics are paid low salary, it is only 5.4% of the domestics that use their saving when laid-off. Most of these were those working in foreigners' residences or in native well-to-do families. These domestics can then use their saving to rent a house and live by themselves until they get another job which mostly does not take more than a month to come by. Although very few, there are some who get an additional service allowance when laid-off. On the other hand, as domestic service is mostly composed of migrant labour, it was only 12.6% of the domestics that stayed in their own homes when laid-off. These are, most of all, live-out servants who have a rented house and their own family, some include those whose parents were in Addis Ababa. It is evident that most domestics suffer when laid-off as most of them will be forced to be dependent on others. One domestic was reported to have been begging when laid-off, while another claimed to shelter in the churchyard.

3.8 Duration to Get Another Employment and Duration to Get a Substitute

Almost half of the domestic servants (48.7%) got another job immediately (usually in 10 days) after they were laid-off. This is because most servants (69.1%) left the previous house they were working in on their own accord which enabled them to look for another job before they left their previous employers (see table 12). This put most employers (61.7%) at a disadvantage as they were compelled to search for a long time (usually two or more months) to get a substitute.

About 21.6% of the laid-off domestics wait for a long time (usually more than 15 days) to look for another employment. This is because some (20.6%) domestics were fired from a house without warning and they couldn't have got another job any sooner (see table 12).

Table 13

**DURATION TO GET EMPLOYMENT WHEN LAID-OFF AND GETTING A
SUBSTITUTE**

| When laid-off, do you get another job? (servants' opinion) | No | % | When you change a servant you get another (employers' opinion) | No. | % |
|--|-----|-------|--|-----|-------|
| - Immediately | 72 | 48.65 | - Immediately | 35 | 26.32 |
| - After waiting for a long time | 32 | 21.62 | - After Waiting for a long time | 82 | 61.65 |
| - Never laid-off yet | 44* | 29.73 | - Others** | 11 | 8.27 |
| | | | - Not reported | 5 | 3.76 |
| Total | 148 | 100 | | 133 | 100 |

* From this 25% of the domestics never changed a house, while 4.7% have changed a house but were not laid-off

** This includes those who do not change a domestic servant (4.5%) or those who get a servant immediately and sometimes wait for a long time 3.8%.

On the other hand, almost one out of five employers (i.e 16.3%) got a substitute immediately a previous one left their house. The majority of these were believed to be those who fired a servant on their own initiative.

It is seen above that the demand for domestics is relatively higher than the supply. The presence of a higher demand for domestics in Addis Ababa seemed to encourage domestic servants to leave their previous employers on their own accord as they are guaranteed to get another job. The supply of domestics appears to be low not because of the absence of jobless women in the city of Addis Ababa, but because of the reluctance of alternateness women to be domestics.

Moreover, from our previous discussions, it was seen that most domestics get into this activity as a last resort when they are left with no other alternative.

3.9 Wages of Domestic Servants

Regarding the monthly salary domestics get, the majority (42.6%), as could be seen in table 14, fall in the income bracket of between Birr 25 and Birr 45. About 16.9% of the domestics earn more than or equal to Birr 66 per month. Surprisingly, of those who are currently paid 66 or more Birr a month (16.9%), the majority of this proportion i.e 10.14% were already paid greater or equal to Birr 40 at first employment. Generally, it is recorded that changing a house is the most common way used by domestics to get a pay rise. It is because the personal nature of the relationship they have with their employers will make it difficult for domestics to ask for a raise. Moreover, if a domestic ask for a pay raise and is refused, she may feel hurt and has to leave. On the other hand, it is possible that one employer may offer higher than the market wages because she is especially attached to the worker and prefers her company.

The above facts reveal that the higher domestics earn when they first started this activity, the higher would be the current salary they receive. And once a woman is in a job, she mostly tends to stay on at the same wage at which she started. If we look at the proportion of those who started with the salary ranges Birr 25-36 (i.e. 31.8%), the majority of them are still kept in salary levels below Birr 45. In addition to this, of those who were paid between Birr 10 to 24 a month (i.e. 31.8%), 8.11% of them still earn below Birr 25 while the same proportion earn between Birr 36-45 a month. This indicates that more than any other factor, it is the level of salary at first employment that strongly dictates the current one. As an exception, 2% of the domestics who have started with Birr 40 and above currently earn less or equal to Birr 35. That is less than the

salary they were paid when they first started this activity. This reduction in salary may occur due to the insistence of some domestic servants to work in a house paying less than they used to get just to avoid working

in a house they were previously employed in where employers may be nagging, or there may be over work or they may have got differences in religion. Besides, if a given domestic conceives a child while staying with her employers she would be fired and urged to start work at a lower payment somewhere.

Generally, the majority of the domestics are compelled to start work at a lower payment especially when they are laid-off, just to avoid problems related to shelter, food and other necessities in the interim period.

For the majority (65.4%) of the domestics, the salary at first employment ranges between Birr 10 and 39 per month. Out of which, 33.8% fall in the income bracket between Birr 10 to 24 while 31.8% of these domestics are in the income bracket between 25 to 39. Some 27.7% of the domestics first started with Birr 40 and above.

The above discussion demonstrates the absence of a fixed starting salary. Here the influence of the employers' side in determining the salary domestics earn becomes more evident than the market demand for and supply of domestics or other human capital assets contained in each domestic. And it is recorded that the initial salary for domestics of somewhat the same qualities is sometimes different, and domestics of varied qualities are seen to get equal payment.

Wealthier households are expected to pay more, although not as a rule.

Employers generally want to pay as little as possible, while workers strive to get a higher payment. It often occurs that employers who were paying higher prices at one time for a domestic may at

another time pay a lower salary for another domestic servant of better qualities. This is because both parties strive to maximise their interests.

The most common reported factor that put domestic servants at a disadvantage, as to force them to accept lower offer in time of wage fixation, is lack of a relative to accommodate them when they are laid-off. Employers also suffer as they have to wait long to get a substitute domestic. Although not significant, the presence of higher demand for domestic helps enable women to ask for a higher payment. However, not only employers suffer in waiting long to get a domestic but also some domestic servants wait long to get reemployment. This shows how the market for domestic service is unpredictable. Generally, an employer makes an offer and the domestic either accepts or refuses weighing her real worth or the sincerity and behaviour of her employer, or considering the workload. If she anticipates too much work, a domestic has to look for another house provided someone accommodates her.

The need for a more thorough analysis at a micro level regarding the process of domestic wage fixation may be suggested at this point. The analysis can take into account possible attributes such as educational status, number of years in service, number of houses changed, age, marital status, condition of employment (either through a broker or through a relative), the state of employment (as live-in or as live-out), the region they came from, the physical status of the domestic, other human capital assets, the wealth and size of the employers' family, government policies (such as those that focus on tax policies, social security laws, migration policies which

could affect both parties), the type of house they are working-in (foreigners' residence vs single male or female led households, family led households, or widowed, pension, or households running petty-trades), and cultural and ethnic affiliation....

Table 14

COMPARISON OF INITIAL AND CURRENT SALARY OF DOMESTICS

| First start Birr | Current Salary in Birr | | | | | | | | | | | | Total | % |
|---------------------|------------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-----|-------|-------|-------|
| | <25 | % | 26-35 | % | 36-45 | % | 46-55 | % | 56-65 | % | ≥66 | % | | |
| <10 | 1 | 0.68 | 2 | 1.35 | 4 | 2.70 | 2 | 1.35 | 1 | 0.68 | - | - | 10 | 6.76 |
| 10-24 | 12 | 8.11 | 11 | 7.43 | 12 | 8.11 | 8 | 5.41 | 4 | 2.70 | 3 | 2.03 | 50 | 33.78 |
| 25-39 | 6 | 4.05 | 11 | 7.43 | 13 | 8.78 | 9 | 6.08 | 1 | 0.68 | 7 | 4.73 | 47 | 31.76 |
| ≥40 | 1 | 0.68 | 2 | 1.35 | 12 | 8.11 | 9 | 6.08 | 2 | 1.35 | 15 | 10.14 | 41 | 27.70 |
| Total | 20 | 13.5 | 26 | 17.57 | 41 | 27.70 | 28 | 18.92 | 8 | 5.41 | 25 | 16.89 | 148 | 100 |

Of all the factors that are given emphasis in wage fixation, the domestics' ability in performing every household chore is given prime importance by the majority (89.4%) of the employers in determining the salary of their would - be domestic servants. Employers mostly enquire on the ability of domestic servants by questioning either the domestic servant herself or the person who brings the domestic servant (usually a relative of her or a broker). Some other employers (i.e 5.3%) are willing to pay their new domestic servant what they think to be the prevailing monthly salary at the time of bargaining. It should however be noted that there is no fixed market rate for the domestics. This is because different employers consider different qualities in fixing a salary. The quality that is given least emphasis in determining the real worth of domestics is found out to be their educational level where only 2.3% of the employers claimed to give it attention in fixing the salary of their would be domestic.

The implication of this little concern of employers (2.3%) for the educational status of their would be domestic servants, has a negative influence on the motivation of domestics for learning.

Table 15

EMPLOYERS' CRITERIA IN FIXING DOMESTIC SERVANTS' SALARY

| | No. | % |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| You fix your servant's salary: | | |
| - According to her skill | 118 | 89.40 |
| - According to the prevailing salary | 7 | 5.30 |
| - According to her educational level | 3 | 2.27 |
| - Others* | 4 | 3.03 |

* This includes responses such as it depends on my income (3), I pay according to the servant's demand (1).

Table 16

MEAN, MEDIAN AND MODE OF CURRENT SALARY OF SAMPLED DOMESTIC SERVANTS

| Salary Range | Frequency | % |
|--------------|-----------|--------|
| 14-62 | 122 | 82.43 |
| 63-111 | 16 | 10.81 |
| 112-160 | 5 | 3.38 |
| 161-209 | 2 | 1.35 |
| 210-258 | 1 | 0.68 |
| 259-307 | 0 | 00 |
| 308-356 | 1 | 0.68 |
| 357-405 | 1 | 0.68 |
| Total | 148 | 100.00 |

Mean salary 54
 Median 43.22
 Mode 39.72

Taking median as the most appropriate measure of central tendency, the average salary for the domestics is Birr 43.20. Mean and mode here are not found appropriate as this data is highly skewed.

3.10 Research Hypothesis

There was a relationship between duration of activity and the salary domestics earn, table 17 shows the kind of the relation the two variables have.

Table 17

DURATION OF ACTIVITY AND CURRENT SALARY OF DOMESTICS

| Salary | Duration of activity | | | | | Total |
|--------|----------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|-------|
| | <1 | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5-6 | >6 | |
| <=25 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 23 |
| 26-35 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 25 |
| 36-45 | 6 | 6 | 13 | 7 | 6 | 38 |
| 46-55 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 8 |
| >65 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 25 |
| Total | 30 | 29 | 28 | 24 | 37 | 148 |

CHI - SQUARE Calculated = 36.24265

CHI - SQUARE tabulated = a) at 0.05 significance level
is 34.41

b) at 0.01 significance level
is 37.57

This indicates that at 5% level, duration of activity depends on the salary index and vice-versa; while at 1% level duration of activity is independent of salary index.

And when we now summarise the foregoing discussion, we find that domestic servants work for many hours a day; they rise early in the morning and sleep late at night. They have no regular hours of work and are not entitled to overtime work with payment. In addition, they do not have fixed meal time. Most domestics want to work in family led households and households led by single female were the least preferred. Either way, most domestics are required to do all-round household duties with no additional payment.

Although most domestics claim to have developed a smooth relationship with their employers, one of the reported reasons for leaving a house was said to be employers' bad conduct.

Domestic activity exists in two forms, namely live-in and live-out. Of the two, live-in service is commoner and is favoured by both employers and employees. On the other hand, married and separated women are employed as live-out domestic servants and are usually employed as part time workers. This is either because most employers refuse to hire a married woman, or the domestic has children or the servant may prefer to be a live-out worker so as to be able to take up her own home responsibilities.

The majority of domestics received Birr 25-45 a month. And almost all of them are provided with food and shelter. There is no market determined going rate salary. And wages are usually fixed through bargaining i.e each time a domestic changes employer, or the other way they should enter into bargaining. So it becomes difficult to trace the factors that affect/determine the level of salary. In fact, in wage fixation, a woman's ability in performing household chores is given preference while her educational level is almost totally neglected.

Domestic service is characterised by a higher shift of workers from house to house but not to other fields. And the job is insecure as some domestics wait long to get another employer while most employers wait for months to get substitutes.

Domestics could also be grouped into those who find their way into it willingly and those who never planned their career as a domestic. In the former case, their parents are satisfied in their daughter's being a domestic, while in the latter they feel unhappy.

Lastly, it can be concluded that the working environment of domestics dictated by both their own parents, their employers and their children plus the condition of the given domestic servant. Government intervention that aims to improve the conditions of work of domestics is non-existent.



CHAPTER FOUR

SOME BENEFITS OF DOMESTIC SERVANTS

4.1 Meals of Domestic

As regards mealtime, 71.6% of sampled domestics said they get food at normal meal times. However, 18.2% are provided with (or allowed to eat) food only when they finished the domestic work or any particular assignment. Therefore, these latter domestic servants sometimes get hungry, especially when they are washing clothes, prepare beverages or clean the house for special occasions like when holidays approach or when guests are expected for feasts. And in these cases it is unlikely to take notice of the domestic servant's meal time. On the other hand, 7.4% domestics claimed never to have dined at normal meal times.

About seven out of ten domestics (73.5%) are given food that is the same both in amount and quality to that of their employers. There is this opinion of most employers to allow a domestic servant to eat what she prepared as they regard this correct behaviour.

Table 18

THE MEAL TIME AND QUALITY OF FOOD OF DOMESTICS.

| | No. | % |
|---|-----|-------|
| Your meal time is: | | |
| - at normal meal times | 106 | 71.62 |
| - when you finish your work | 27 | 18.25 |
| - always not at normal meal times | 11 | 7.43 |
| -others* | 4 | 2.70 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |
| Your meal is: | | |
| -quantitatively and qualitatively the same as employers | 111 | 73.51 |
| -less in quantity but equal in quality with employers | 5 | 3.31 |
| -equal in quality but more in quantity than employers | 1 | 0.66 |
| -prepared separately | 9 | 5.96 |
| -whatever you like | 18 | 11.92 |
| -due to strict inspection you are always hungry | 2 | 1.33 |
| -others** | 5 | 3.31 |
| Total | 151 | 100 |
| During festivities and holidays | | |
| you eat leftover of your employer | 18 | 12.00 |
| you are served the same as the family | 118 | 78.67 |
| you eat separately prepared food | 6 | 4.00 |
| others*** | 8 | 5.33 |
| Total | 152 | 100 |
| You eat | | |
| what you want | 122 | 82.43 |
| only what your employer gives you | 25 | 16.89 |
| others*** | 1 | 0.68 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |

* 3 (2.03%) eat what their employers provide them, 1(0.68%) eats whatever she wants.

** 2 (1.37%) eat what their employers give them, 3 (1.99%) eat in their own homes.

*** 5 (3.33%) stay in their own home, 1 (0.67%) visits relatives, 1(0.67%) has different religion with employers so is served separately prepared food, 1(0.67%) is new to the activity and has never spent a holiday outside her home yet.

**** eat what they prepared in their own home 1 & 2 indicate double counting because of respondents giving more than one answer.

Some other domestics eat food equal in quality with that of their employers. The food may also be either less in quantity (3.3%) or more in quantity (0.7%) compared with their employers. Only one out of a hundred (1.3%) said she went hungry mainly due to strict inspection, while 6% of the domestics eat separately prepared food usually less in quality compared to their employers' food

(either they have got different religion with their respective employers or they themselves need to separate their meal due to cultural differences of feeding especially those who were employed in foreigners' residence). It is also seen often that different dishes are prepared when employers want to eat a particular food only themselves or preserve it for a guest - especially when they face shortages. Like, if there is small meat then the domestic servant is told to prepare another meal for herself. Sometimes observing the shortage of the budget, the domestic servant herself prepares her own separate meal.

During festivities and holidays, the majority of domestics (78.7%) will eat with the family with no discrimination. Only 4% are served a separately prepared food mostly caused by differences in religion while 12% eat remains of the table, this usually happens in well to do families. Meanwhile, the issue of food does not appear to be a pressing problem for many domestics. However, there are domestic servants who are given a small amount and are also served remains of the table. Member's case may serve to illustrate this situation. When Member had her own house, she used to prepare and eat a meal she liked whenever she felt like it. But today she often misses breakfast. No one cares for her breakfast unless there is some remains of a meal. And she feels bad to ask for breakfast. The employers also never give her lunch on time so she often goes hungry (see appendix E).

Live-out domestic servants sometimes get breakfast, and usually lunch, in the home they are employed in. It was observed that only one live-out domestic servant employed in foreigners' residence brought her own food from her home to the work place. Those live-out servants who perform casual works, on special occasions such as on weddings, mournings and other similar events, also get their meal from their employers. Others who go into a contract to bake **enjera** are given one loaf to take home, in addition to the lunch (or sometimes the dinner) they get. The meal they get depends on the time they started baking. If a live-out domestic starts baking **enjera** before noon, she is served with lunch, if she starts in the afternoon she is served with dinner.

Simegne depends on the earning she gets as a live-out domestic servant. Some times she takes a contract to prepare local beer (tella) for feasts (weddings or mournings). When she took a contract of such casual work for a given occasion, people pay her up to Birr 50. During performing the casual work, she sometimes spends the night working in a household and gets a chance to be served her food there. Other times, she gets her lunch or dinner in the same house. But as she mentioned, it is a rare case to get such type of casual work.

Simegne complains about the unavailability of work for live-out domestics. She says;

People have stopped employing live-out domestics for baking the staple food (enjera) and for other household chores. Nowadays people use electric stoves to bake enjera. Of course, there are few people who are employing domestics and pay each time which happens every other 3 or 4 days) Birr 3 and a loaf of enjera. And my livelihood depends on these (see appendix D).

4.2 Lodging of Domestics

The majority (71.62%) (see table 17) of the domestics are assigned their own sleeping rooms, while 12.2% of the respondents share a bedroom with some member of the family either with children or employers themselves or with other domestic servants. About 6.1% of the domestics neither get their own sleeping room nor share with other members of the family. These domestic servants sleep on the floor or in the kitchen on a mattress made from sacks filled with straw. Those domestic servants who sleep on the floor of the living room or the kitchen should pick their sleeping materials every morning. Due to the coldness of both the floor and the kitchen these domestic servants may be exposed to illnesses. The rest, (10.2%) are live-out domestic servants who do not have sleeping places in their employers' house. But some of the live-out domestic servants had problems regarding sleeping places. This is evidenced by what Wz/o Shitaye Tsegaye, 45, encountered. Shitaye lives in a very small room with her three children. The room was given to her husband from his relatives; but after the revolution the kebele officials asked

them to pay Birr 4.50 rent per month. And as they are poor, they could not pay the requested amount. So, the kebele officials partitioned the room and then rented one part to another woman and left the other part to Wz/o Shitaye and her family. Now she is living in this very small room using a very small bed which she sleeps on together with her three children (see appendix G).

Wz/o Simegne Gabre has a similar problem. The kebele officials rented the present small room to Wz/o simegne and another woman. In the room she lives with her two children and her husband.

She said that because of lack of enough sleeping space, her children sleep somewhere outside of the house (see appendix F). This implies that the lodging of live-in domestic servants is better than live-out counterparts.

Table 19

SLEEPING PLACE AND MATERIALS FOR DOMESTICS.

| | No. | % |
|-----------------------------|-----|-------|
| <u>Sleeping place</u> | | |
| - Get my own sleeping room | 106 | 71.62 |
| - Don't get sleeping room* | 9 | 6.08 |
| - share a bedroom | 18 | 12.16 |
| - Live-out (don't need one) | 15 | 10.14 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |
| <u>Sleeping materials</u> | | |
| - Have no problem | 95 | 64.19 |
| - Have problem** | 38 | 25.68 |
| - Live-out (don't need one) | 15 | 10.14 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |

* This includes those who are sleeping on the floor (some in the kitchen on a mattress) some on sacks filled with straw.

** Of these 17(11.49%) had no beds, while 2 (1.35%) had no pillows, 11(7.43%) had nothing at all. There are also some who lack either sheets, blankets or others.

As regards the availability of sleeping materials, the majority (64.2%) have no problem while a fourth (25.7%) of the domestic servants have encountered such problems as lack beds and sheets. Of course, there are live-in domestic servants who bring their own blanket and bed sheets to the workplace. So, it seems that sleeping materials are not a serious problem for many live-in domestics. Needless to say, all live-out domestics are not provided with sleeping materials by their employers.

4.3 Opinion of Domestics Regarding Wage Fixation and Stipulation of Leaves

Almost half of the domestics (47.3%) see no reason why minimum wage and the right to have access to leaves are not stipulated by law. This opinion is observed mainly among educated domestics. Almost seven out of ten that attained high school, and almost half of those that finished elementary education hold this view and this hints at a situation that awareness and interest of domestics in guarding their rights increase with academic advancement. But only one-third of those who had no schooling hold this view.

Table 20

DOMESTICS' OPINION ON LEAVES AND MINIMUM WAGE BY EDUCATIONAL STATUS

| What do you anticipate if leaves*and minimum wage are stipulated by law? | No school | | primary | | secondary | | total | |
|--|-----------|-------|---------|-------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|
| | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % |
| - No problem | 16 | 10.81 | 30 | 20.27 | 24 | 16.22 | 70 | 47.30 |
| - May cause problems | 22 | 14.86 | 27 | 18.24 | 7 | 4.73 | 56 | 37.84 |
| - I don't know | 11 | 7.43 | 5 | 3.39 | 6 | 4.05 | 22 | 14.86 |
| Total | 49 | 33.11 | 62 | 41.89 | 37 | 25 | 148 | 100 |

* This includes annual leave, maternity leave, sick leave and mourning leave.

On the other hand, almost four out of ten domestics are reported to express their fear that government intervention in fixing minimum wage or passing laws to let them have leaves may to cause disagreement with their employers. This view is dominant among those who have had no schooling (14.9%); the percentage declines with domestics who have finished primary (18.2%) and even more secondary levels (4.7%). Most of those who are worry of government action either think regulating laws in this non-formal sector as totally difficult or else they fear state intervention will negatively affect their relationship with their employers. Most said that this may risk their jobs. They also said minimum wage fixation may be impossible as domestics possess varied qualities.

However, fifteen out of hundred (i.e 14.9%), almost half of whom are uneducated, do not worry about the consequences of such government intervention.

4.4 Day-Off

Although getting a leave is not stipulated by law as a right of domestics, most live-in (89.5%) and live-out (53.3%) domestics are given leaves (See table 21). However, 10.5% of the live-in domestic servants and 46.7% of the live-out domestic servants do not get day-offs. Those who are new to the job are not aware of time-offs and do not know where to go. If employers know that a domestic is new to the job, they do not want to give her a day-off. Mean while, the above figures show that live-in domestic servants have a better chance for a day-off than their live-out counterparts. This is because most live-out domestic servants do occasional work which makes obtaining a day-off unnecessary.

When we come to the frequency of taking a leave, 77.3% of the live-in domestic servants get a day-off once in a month on either Sundays or Saturdays. About 7.6% of the domestics, get their day-off every fortnight on Sundays and/or Saturdays, while 5.9% of the domestics get day-offs

every Sundays. The rest, (9.3%) of the domestics get a day-off anytime they want. It is expected that those domestic servants who get a day-off whenever they want have a smooth relationship with their employers. But the day-off for these favoured domestics may not exceed the 10 hours that is given to other domestic servants.

This shows that the day-off domestics get varies from house to house depending on the good will of employers. About 75% of the live-out domestic servants get a leave every Sundays. Generally speaking, there is no constant scheduling of a day-off that a domestic may claim as a right; besides

the good will of employers day-offs also depend on the presence or absence of household chores at a given time. A domestic who used to get a day-off once a month may be denied this privilege for months if there happens, to be much work to be done on the particular day she was supposed to rest.

Table 21

DOMESTICS' DAY-OFF BY TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT

| | Type of employment | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|-------|----------|--------|-------|-------|
| | live-in | | live-out | | total | |
| Facts about a day-off | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Do you get a day-off? | | | | | | |
| Yes | 119 | 89.47 | 8 | 53.33 | 127 | 85.81 |
| No | 14 | 10.53 | 7* | 46.67 | 21 | 14.19 |
| Total | 133 | 100 | 15 | 100.00 | | 100.0 |
| Your day-off was | | | | | | |
| - once a month on Sundays and/or Saturdays | 92 | 77.31 | 1 | 12.50 | 93 | 73.23 |
| - every fortnight on Sundays and/or Saturdays | 9 | 7.56 | 1 | 12.50 | 10 | 7.87 |
| - every Sunday | 7 | 5.88 | 6 | 75.00 | 13 | 10.24 |
| - any time when I want | 11 | 9.25 | - | - | 11 | 8.66 |
| Total | 119 | 80.40 | 8 | 100 | 127 | 100 |
| During a day-off | | | | | | |
| - visit relatives or friends | 112 | 65.12 | 3 | 37.50 | 115 | 63.89 |
| - attend church ceremonies | 32 | 18.60 | 3 | 37.50 | 35 | 19.44 |
| - go shopping | 21 | 12.21 | - | - | 21 | 11.67 |
| - go to picnic | 4 | 2.33 | - | - | 4 | 2.22 |
| - go nowhere | 1 | 0.58 | 2 | 25.00 | 3 | 1.67 |
| - not reported | 2 | 1.16 | - | - | 2 | 1.11 |
| Total | 172** | 100 | 8 | 100 | 180** | 100 |

* This indicates that there are live-out domestic servants who do not get day-offs because they mostly perform occasional work.

** This is due to double counting as 34 domestic servants do more than one thing during their day-off.

Mostly day-offs start at 8 in the morning and go up until 6 in the afternoon. Domestic servants who go out for a day-off are expected to come back on time. As Dawes (1973:77) said "Punctuality in

returning from time-off was a mania with most employers. Domestic servants had to be back at 10pm promptly and failure to comply was simply not tolerated". This is evidenced by what one domestic servant, Menbere, noted. Menbere says that she gets a day-off on Sundays once every fortnight. During her leave, she visits her family. She takes her day-off at 8 in the morning and return at 6 in the afternoon. If she fails to return on time, she will be insulted for being late (see appendix E).

During a day-off the majority (62.2%) of live-in domestic servants visit their relatives and/or friends. About 17.8% of the live-in domestic servants attend church ceremonies; 11.7% of them go shopping during their day-off. Only 2.2% of the resident domestics spend their day-off by going to picnic.

The same proportions of live-out domestic servants (i.e 1.7%) visit relatives and/or friends and attend church ceremonies. Since most live-out domestic servants are living with their families, it is understandable that they do familial duties and participate in other social activities during day-offs. However, it does not mean that a domestic servant spends all the hours of her time-off in one place. Before noon she may attend church ceremonies and then go to her relatives and/or friends in the afternoon. Others directly go to their friends and then go shopping together with them. Also, some domestic servants who came from the same province may form a mutual aid association such as eqqeb and make appointments at their common relatives' and/or friends' homes and meet once a month during their day-offs. Domestic servants who have such associations arrange to get their day-off on the same day.

During a day-off the majority of live-in domestic servants visit or help relatives and friends while most live-out domestic servants, as most of them are already living with their families, do other personal things. The future life of domestics might be determined by such a day-off as they make new friends and many more acquaintances in the city.

4.5 The Education of Domestic

A look into the education of domestics shows that 75% of them were not attending classes. Out of this, 33.1% had no schooling whatsoever. This percentage is divided into 16.9% had not started any form of schooling altogether, while 16.2% who had acquired basic reading and writing skills either through a literacy campaign or through a non-formal education offered in the churches or mosques which serve as preparatory schools mostly in rural Ethiopia. Of the total non-attendants, 39.9% are drop-outs from different educational levels (elementary and secondary). The breakdown of respondents by educational status reveals that 66.9% of the respondents had gone through formal education. Of these 41.9% are at the primary level and the rest 23% are at secondary level while the remaining 2% have completed grade 12.

Among those attending classes, all except one are enrolled in evening classes. This is because domestics have to help with household chores during the day including looking after the children and the house, and all the properties contained in it when their masters are out to work.

Speaking in relative terms, the number of dropouts at the primary level, which stands at 26.3%, is higher than that of secondary level, which stands at 13.5%. This is so partly because, the courses covered in the high school are more theoretical and needed concentrated study, effort and enough study time-taking most domestics are denied.

Other reasons for the high rate of dropouts include lack of incentives for the progress domestics make in their studies. They can not expect high pay and change in their field of employment. Even domestics who manage to finish high school are not seen as successful as they are not well off in any way compared to their uneducated counterparts.

Some domestics have told us that all the above obstacles on their way of learning make them think that basic reading and writing skills are enough for their purpose. This fact is seen by the high proportion of non-attendance observed among domestics.

Another look into the education of domestics reveals that of those who have had formal education most started learning before they joined the world of domestics. So, engagement in this activity tends to suppress the academic activity of most servants.

Table 22

DOMESTICS' EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

| | A | | B | | C | | D | |
|---------------------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| | Attending | | Not atte. | | Drop-out | | Total/A+C | |
| | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % |
| - No schooling | - | - | 49 | 33.11 | - | - | 49 | 33.11 |
| - Not started yet | - | - | 25 | 16.89 | - | - | 25 | 16.89 |
| - Non-formal | - | - | 24 | 16.22 | - | - | 24 | 16.22 |
| - Primary (1-6) | 23 | 15.54 | 39 | 26.35 | 39 | 26.34 | 62 | 41.89 |
| regular | 1 | 0.68 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| evening | 22 | 14.86 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| - Secondary (7-12) | | | | | | | | |
| evening | 14 | 9.46 | 20 | 13.51 | 20 | 13.51 | 34 | 22.97 |
| -completed grade 12 | - | - | 3 | 2.03 | - | - | 3 | 2.03 |
| Total | 37 | 25.00 | 111 | 75 | 59 | 39.86 | 148 | 100 |

The most important reason for dropping-out for both live-in (32.3%) and live-out (46.7%) domestic servants was lack of enough time to attend class. This shows that most domestic servants are busy with their domestic chores. Live-out domestic servants in particular rush from their

home to the house they are employed in and again return to their home to take on their family responsibilities as most are married. Lack of interest to learn was found out to be the second most important factor for dropping out for both live-in (22.9%) and live-out (33.3%) domestic servants.

This implies that attending classes seem to have less impact in helping domestics get a pay rise or be employed in other areas such as office work which most regard as a decent job. Because of this 24.3% of the domestics wish to be office workers (see table 28). It was also reported that those that were attending school were not following classes regularly. A female instructor working in a school that enrolls many domestics reported that most domestics forget the importance of coming to school and use their school time to enjoy with their boy friends or just get some rest. Some do this deliberately and do not accept advice from their teachers. They like to go to school just to avoid the monotonous work, or loneliness, or a series of unconnected work they are supposed to do in their workplace. And they never worry about the money they pay for their schooling. This clearly shows how they are fed up with domestic activity, and the attempts they make to avoid staying at home working.

All live-out domestic servants are never late for registration. This is because they reside in a specific place and don't constantly change their dwelling unlike their live-in counter parts, but this does not mean they never shift the house they are employed in. About 9.4% of live-in domestic servants were late for registration as caused by the continuous flow of migrant labour into the world of domestics and a frequent shift of domestics from the house they are already employed in.

On the other hand, all live-out domestic servants were not migrants. So being late for registration is not a cause to drop out.

Other factors of somewhat equal importance for dropping-out for both live-in and live-out domestic servants were inability to pay their school fee. As their salary is small, some may not have anything left after they spend their money on clothing, shoes, hair oil etc. There are also some domestics who support their families. Moreover, some, especially live-out domestic

servants, have their own families and their salary is not sufficient enough to cover all their household related costs let alone paying the school fee. Sickness accounts for 9% of the drop outs. This occurs mostly when they are ill and are urged to leave their employers because they may not be given medication. Once they recover they fail to restart their job in the same house as it would be occupied by another domestic. 10.8% of the domestics dropped out due to employers' reluctance to send them to school. This is because some want their domestic servants always to be on call. Still others suspect that their domestic servants may use school-time to look for another house so as to leave the house they are employed in. Obviously, employers fear this because if their domestic servants defect, then they may have to search for months to get a substitute, as the supply of domestics is relatively small. Therefore, to avoid this, employers want to take the initiative if they are determined to fire a domestic servant. Some employers also think that domestic servants fake school to get time to enjoy with their boy friends. The time domestics spend in decorating themselves usually for an hour before leaving for school-like combing their hair, and changing clothes-said to put domestic servants in a hurry as to leave home before finishing household chores properly or arranging goods orderly, often causing accidents to happen. Some mistresses also envy their domestic servants decorating themselves.

About 2% of the domestics completed grade 12 but could not find a way out of domestic activity (see table 22). In fact, it also happens that other women who completed grade 12 join this activity as new comers. All these conditions discourage uneducated domestic servants from learning.

Table 23

REASONS FOR NOT ATTENDING CLASSES BY TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT

| Reasons for not attending | Type of Employment | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------|----------|--------|-------|--------|
| | Live in | % | live out | % | Total | % |
| No spare time | | | | | | |
| No interest to learn | 31 | 32.29 | 7 | 46.67 | 38 | 34.23 |
| Late for registration | 22 | 22.92 | 5 | 33.33 | 27 | 24.32 |
| Could not afford the school fee | 9 | 9.38 | 0 | 0.00 | 9 | 8.11 |
| Due to sickness | 11 | 11.46 | 1 | 6.67 | 12 | 10.81 |
| Completed grade | 9 | 9.38 | 1 | 6.67 | 10 | 9.01 |
| Employer do not allow | 3 | 3.13 | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 2.70 |
| Total | 11 | 11.46 | 1 | 6.67 | 12 | 10.81 |
| | 96 | 100.00 | 15 | 100.00 | 111* | 100.00 |

* The remaining 37 were attending classes

Working, as a live-out domestic servant seems to discourage learning, as all of them were not attending school. Most live-out domestic servants are married, widowed or divorcees and most are found to have many children and are of older ages. Besides, they have many personal domestic responsibilities that hinder their attending school. They have to look after their children and husbands and are also expected to participate in many social engagements.

4.6 Presents and Holiday Benefits

Asked whether they get any form of presents, the majority (64.9%) answered positively while the rest (35.1%) claimed never to have received any form of present, be it in kind or in cash. Presents are mainly meant to create a sense of belongingness especially when employers like their domestic's company and want to retain her. Presents include, among other things, used clothes, shoes, or hair oil and soap. Some employers do not give presents because they regard it as an additional expense to the family. Meanwhile, for some poor (not well to do) households it may be difficult to give any presents at all.

Table 24

DOMESTICS' ACCESS TO PRESENTS AND LEAVES ON HOLIDAYS

| | No | % |
|--------------------------|-----|-------|
| Do you get presents? | | |
| Yes | 96 | 64.86 |
| No | 52 | 35.14 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |
| Do you work on holidays? | | |
| Yes | 123 | 83.67 |
| With pay | 10 | 6.80 |
| With no pay | 113 | 76.87 |
| No (get a leave) | 24 | 16.33 |
| Total | 147 | 100 |

In the world of domestics, there seem to be no additional payment for working on holidays. Out of those 83.7% who work on holidays 76.9% work with no payment while only 7% got payments.

On the other hand 16.3% of the domestics did not work on holidays as they got a day-off. This implies that the majority of domestics miss home-life during holidays, time when most families gather together. In these occasions, the work load connected with extended family gatherings will be much heavier than usual. Mostly domestics would be kept in the kitchen and most will not be allowed to join in any of the festivities that employers are not normally in the habit of sharing with their domestics. Of course, some employers make an exception at holiday times by giving their servants some hours of rest. And those servants who got leaves on holidays are not normally given full day leaves. After serving guests, they get time-off usually for about 6 hours or less.

In summary, food was not a problem for most domestics although some were not provided with it on time. During festivities and holidays most domestic servants eat together with their employers.

However, a word of caution is needed here as true answers regarding their meal are hard to come. For one thing, telling what one eats is immoral and it is regarded as a personal affair. For

another, they think giving such answers may put them at odds with their masters in case they knew about it. Most live-in domestic servants reported nothing on the state of their sleeping room and bedclothes.

Almost half of the domestics, especially those with some schooling, welcome government intervention in regulating wages, annual leaves, service allowances and the like. Others fear such government intervention might result in disagreement with their employers. And they seem to count on the good will of their employers to get their rights.

Live-in domestic servants are favoured in getting leaves compared to their live-out counterparts most of whom do not have a fixed employer as they mostly work casual work (moving from house to house).

School attendance was less common as the majority of the domestic servants have quitted school at the time of this study. This lower rate of academic activity was partly attributed to lack of enough time, interest and money. Of course, there were employers who refused to send their domestic servants to school.

In some sense, girls that got access to domestic activity are relatively better than some rural girls who are denied access to schooling, and better medication. These rural girls are also exposed to early marriage, overwork in the farm and face many more problems associated with rural life. But most domestic servants start school before joining this activity, and they might have a relative or someone who might take into towns and help them to get into this activity.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RIGHTS OF DOMESTIC SERVANTS

5.1 Domestic's Opinion Regarding Forming a Union

In Ethiopia, domestics have no legally-recognised association. As a result, they have no opportunity to organise and run their own union. They have not had any experience or have not exercised the right to call meetings to negotiate with employers. Unlike workers in a factory where relations with employers are based on collective agreement, the relation between domestics and their employers is more of a personal nature. Domestics have no capacity to deal with problems collectively. They could not use any legal provision written or otherwise to force employers be answerable to the relevant law. Domestics cannot go on strikes. In case there emerges a disagreement between domestic and employer the domestic has to leave that house. Due to the fact that domestics do not have unions, they are often fired without any prior notice and compensation.

The following issues related to the possibility of establishing a union for domestics are treated based on the opinion of domestics.

Table 25

DOMESTICS' OPINION REGARDING FORMING AND SUPPORTING THEIR UNION

| Participation of domestics | YES | | NO | | I don't know | | Total | |
|---|-----|-------|-----|-------|--------------|------|-------|-----|
| | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % |
| -Support the formation | 119 | 81.41 | 25 | 16.89 | 4 | 2.7 | 148 | 100 |
| -Contribution (member- ship fee) | 86 | 58.11 | 59 | 39.86 | 3 | 2.03 | 148 | 100 |
| -Attend meetings | 61 | 41.22 | 86 | 58.11 | 1 | 0.67 | 148 | 100 |
| -compromise with employers | 51 | 34.46 | 94 | 63.51 | 3 | 2.03 | 148 | 100 |
| -Lead & administer the union | 55 | 37.16 | 91 | 61.49 | 2 | 1.35 | 148 | 100 |
| -Can organize a demonstration | 34 | 22.97 | 112 | 75.68 | 2 | 1.35 | 148 | 100 |
| -Can organize a strike | 21 | 14.19 | 126 | 85.14 | 1 | 0.67 | 148 | 100 |
| -The union will help to solve each members' problem | 88 | 59.46 | 59 | 39.86 | 1 | 0.68 | 148 | 100 |

According to table 25 the majority (80.4%) of the domestics support the idea of forming a union. More than half (58.1%) of them declare their willingness to contribute membership fee for such a union. About the same number (59.9%) of the respondents think that the union will help them solve their problems. If we come to willingness to attend meetings (58.1%), compromise with employers (63.5%), their ability to lead and administer their union (61.5%) the possibility of organizing a strike or a demonstration, more than half of the domestics have reservations about its practicality. They fear that such radical moves would risk their jobs. This implies that the participation of domestic servants in their union will be less due to the private nature of the relationship between employers and employees. Even if special procedures are set up to uphold their rights, the implementation will not be an easy task. The experiences of many countries show this reality. In Managua- Nicaragua domestic servants' union was founded in 1980, and after a year the members were boosted up to 2000 in the country, but due to employers' hostile reaction, the number of active participants of the union declined immediately. In connection to this Collinson (1990: 66) noted:

Employers' reactions to the new laws were generally hostile... employers then began spying on the Domestic Workers' Union, sometimes even attending meetings. If they saw any of their employees present at the meetings they immediately fired them. Not surprisingly, this discouraged other domestics from becoming involved in the union or, indeed, from doing any thing to fight for their newly gained rights. By 1981, in Managua, out of a total membership of 1,200, only 30 women were actively participating in the union.

This implies that organising domestic servants is a very difficult task.

5.2 Legal Provision and Places of Appeal

Domestic servants are excluded from the domain of the labour law. As mentioned in the labour proclamation No. 64 of 1975 article 27, sub-article (f) domestic servants excluded from the domain of the labour law (Negarit Gazeta, proclamation No. 64 of 1975, labour proclamation, p. 58). It may be due to the ideology that the Government of Ethiopia was following. During that

time the guiding principle of the country was socialism, which discourages personal services. So declaring a proclamation, which excluded domestic servants, seems purposive. The new labour proclamation issued by the Transitional Government of Ethiopia on January 1993 also evades the issue of domestic servants by giving a promise which states, "the council of Ministers shall issue regulation governing conditions of work applicable to personal services" (Negarit Gazeta, No. 27, 20 January 1993, p. 270). It is an interesting promise, which needs to be put into practice. However, the law on contract of employment in general and special provisions on domestic servants in particular included in the civil code can govern domestic servants. Nevertheless, 95.5% of employers and 88.5% of domestics (see table 26) are ignorant of the legal provisions given to domestics in the Ethiopian civil code. It is reported that very few (11.5%) of the domestics know the legal provisions given to them. It is understandable that for most of those domestics legal provisions refer to the kebele (local offices) or the police station itself, not the written legal provisions given in the civil code of Ethiopia. Due to this the contractual agreement between domestic servants and employers is still based on the traditionally established ways and practices. Of course, before domestics can move to protect their rights by these provisions, they should be aware of the law given to them. But due to their ignorance of the law, domestics cannot utilize it to their advantages. And it was the responsibility of The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, The Ministry of Justice, and The Ministry of Information and other concerned bodies to make domestic servants and their employers aware, about the legal provisions given to domestics. However, the law itself, as it appears now, has many deficiencies and cannot meet the needs of domestics to protect their rights. The law does not provide serious imposition on termination of the contract, resident domestic servants are not entitled to the right to regular hours of work and rest and young domestic servants are not provided protection (Endalkachew, 1987: 55).

Table 26

DOMESTICS' AWARENESS OF LEGAL PROVISIONS AND PLACES THEY GO TO GET LEGAL HELP

| | No | % |
|--|--------|--------|
| Do you know the existence of legal provisions for domestic servants? (Employers) | 133 | 100.00 |
| -Yes | 1 | 1.50 |
| -No | 131 | 98.50 |
| Do you know the existence of legal provisions for domestic servants? (Domestic) | 148 | 100.00 |
| -Yes | 17 | 11.49 |
| -No | 131 | 88.51 |
| Where do you go to get legal help (Domestics) | | |
| -Kebele | 41 | |
| -police station | 18 | |
| -relatives | 22 | |
| -go no where | 26 | |
| -not encountered | 55 | |
| -other * | 10 | |
| Total | 172 ** | 100.00 |

* This includes, those who do not know where to go 5(2.91%), not reported 3(1.74%), to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1 (0.58%), to the court (0.58%).

** This is due to double counting.

Regarding the place where domestics go for legal help, many (23.8%) of the domestics go to the kebeles (local offices) while 10.5% of the respondents go to the police station. About 12.8% of the respondents go to their relatives while 15.1% of the domestics do not want to go anywhere. This may be due to the sense of hopelessness in getting justice from the kebeles or the police-station. A significant number (32%) of the domestics did not encounter any problem as to push them to seek legal help. These may be those who did not stay in the occupation for long or they may be employed through their relatives who may help them to solve the problems they encountered.

From the above findings we can see that domestic servants are getting the least legal protection compared to other groups of workers in Ethiopia.

CHAPTER SIX

DOMESTICS' OPINION OF BEING A DOMESTIC

6.1 The Benefits and Impacts of Domestic Service

Asked on the advantages domestics draw from being a domestic servant, 34.5% of the respondents answered that they drew no benefits. The same proportion of domestics, however, says that their becoming a domestic helps them to support themselves and their family. This implies that some live-in and live-out domestics support their family from the money they get as domestics. About 23.7% of the domestics reported that their becoming a domestic servant helped them to get their necessities. This implies that becoming a domestic helped them for getting boarding and lodging and sometimes clothing. Very few (7.4%) of the domestics got the chance to attend classes. These domestics may be among those who have got permission from their employers to attend evening classes. This is a benefit which other girls, mostly in the country side, cannot get.

Table 27

BENEFITS GAINED AND THE IMPACTS OF BEING A DOMESTIC

| Benefits | No | % |
|--|-----|-------|
| - Only the necessities | 35 | 23.65 |
| - Able to support myself and my family | 51 | 34.46 |
| - Got a chance to learn | 11 | 7.43 |
| - Nothing | 51 | 34.46 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |
| Impacts | | |
| - Inferiority | 21 | 14.19 |
| - No promising future | 12 | 8.11 |
| - Feel insecure | 11 | 7.43 |
| - No impact | 78 | 52.70 |
| - I Don't Know | 26 | 17.57 |
| Total | 148 | 100 |

Regarding the feelings they developed on being a domestic, 52.7% reported that it made no negative impact on their life. This indicates that the number of domestics who accepted domestic service as a profession is high. As mentioned in chapter two most of the domestic servants are migrants from rural areas or other small towns. For those poor and alternateness girls domestic service helps to alleviate some of their acute problems. And domestic servants know the bad conditions of their families through letters from their families or through persons who came from their home town or village or when they go to their home town or village to visit their parents. Compared to their poor families, domestic servants have better conditions of life. So it may be due to these reasons domestic service becomes a preferred occupation with no negative impact for these domestics. About 14.2% of the domestics state that they have developed an inferiority complex. This indicates that domestic service is a degrading position for some domestics. About 29.7 of the domestics were found to have disliked the consequences of being a domestic and felt insecure and never thought of having any promising future. This shows that once they were involved in this activity, domestics would not get an alternative occupation. About 17.6% of the domestics did not know or never thought of the impacts of becoming a domestic servant. This shows that some domestics do not know what attitude the society have towards domestic service and do not anticipate what they will encounter once they start the work.

6.2 Domestics' Future Plan

When asked to express their views on their future plans, only 10.8% of the domestics intend to continue on this activity (see table 28). About 23.7% think of no bright future and they in fact never think of the future. The rest (65.5%) of the respondents want to leave this activity. This presentation clearly shows that domestics hope to avoid staying in the job.

The level of acceptance of this activity as a profession by the society seems to be quite low. The services domestics offer are not given due respect. Domestics are held in contempt by their masters - insult, rape ... are common practices. But domestics always try to overcome some of these problems with patience. A domestic, an ex-government employee, says "If I am insulted I just act as though I had not heard it. Although my job was boring, I managed to hide my feeling. I had to be patient so as to secure my salary "(Appendix E).

Most domestics seem to have found this job as a dreary task. Although most domestics want to get change this activity, it is only 3.4% who want to return to their birthplace leaving their jobs behind. This is because the hometown they once left has no better opportunities.

Table 28

DOMESTICS' FUTURE PLAN

| Future Plans of Domestic Servants | No | % |
|--|-----|--------|
| - Get married | 25 | 16.89 |
| - Make my own business | 31 | 20.95 |
| - Be a government employee | 36 | 24.32 |
| - Return to home area | 5 | 3.38 |
| - Continue in the same activity and complete high school education | 16 | 10.81 |
| - Never thought of the future | 35 | 23.65 |
| Total | 148 | 100.00 |

Government employment is found more attractive for 24.3% of the domestics. This may be due to the negative societal perception of the occupation and of domestic servants. A "janitor" in government employment has better respect than a domestic who earns better than the "janitor". In addition to the status, government employment may help its workers get pension during old-age which is impossible in the case of domestic service. About 21% of the respondents want to run their own business in order to be relieved from domestic service.

Some (16.9%) of the domestics who do not want to remain in the same employment contend that a stable marriage is a better choice than domestic service.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

When we assess the background characteristics of domestic servants, the majority (89.2%) of them are single young migrants mostly (75%) from northern and central parts of the country.

Average age of domestic servants was found to be 25 years.

Domestics migrate to the city due to various reasons such as to escape from famine, poverty, oppressive traditions and work-load. Others come with their family willingly. Relatives bring some women promising to accommodate and send them to school, while a few come so as to get better medication and then failed to return home.

Some domestic servants first start giving their service in small towns and earn low salary with poor living conditions. Then they move to provincial towns and then to Addis Ababa. Such domestic servants are already accustomed to city life. The salary they get in Addis Ababa is probably more than two folds than it was in the provincial towns.

Others come directly to Addis Ababa willingly and spend the first few weeks with their relatives or with the person whom they know or whom they come with. During these weeks the migrant women or girls are acculturated to some of the new things in cities such as how to use running water, receive messages through telephones, operating electrical devices, stoves, and how to use a flush toilet. After a while, they are employed in somebody's house as a domestic servant through relatives. Of course, some come directly to their employers.

Domestics get employment through relatives and brokers. However, employment through relatives is preferred by employers and employees for the sense of security such an arrangement has an advantage for both.

Women who lack some skills to perform household duties properly have no alternative but to be employed on any condition in any household. Because of this, most of the newcomers earn low wages and work for long hours with poor living conditions. However, in the first house they are employed in they receive a kind of on-the-job-training and get more acculturation of the city life. This is the advantage domestic servants get from their first employers. But if they do not get a rise in salary after a year or so, domestic servants tend to move to new employers who can pay them better than those who employed them first. Domestics usually increase their salary by using the above-mentioned method. Some of those who have much experience or skill of household activity can earn satisfactory wages and get better living and working conditions than those of the 'new comers'.

Besides rural or provincial migrant girls, poor and alternateness girls whose origin is in Addis Ababa are also involved in domestic service. Girls who want to be independent and support themselves engage in domestic service as one other alternative. Some others from the city join the world of domestic service for reasons such as their parents are financially unable to send them to school. Most domestics want to be employed in family led households but households led by single females were the least preferred.

Domestic activity exists in two forms: live-in and live-out. Of the two, live-in service prevails and is favoured by both employers and employees. On the other hand, married domestics are employed as casual workers. This is either because most employers refuse to hire a married woman especially if she has children or the woman may prefer to be a live-out domestic servant to be able to take up her own home responsibility.

There is no regulation concerning domestic servants' working hours. Their working hour is almost unlimited (on call twenty-four hours a day). Domestics rise early in the morning and sleep late at night.

They have no regular hours of work and are not entitled to over-time work with payment. They also do not have fixed meal times.

Concerning the services domestics render, the majorities (64.9%) do all-round household duties, which are always unspecified. Some do specialized tasks like cooking, cleaning or taking care of the children.

The majorities (42.6%) of domestics receive Birr 25-45 a month. All of the live-in domestics are provided with food and shelter. There is no market determined going rate salary. And wages are usually fixed through bargaining. So, it becomes difficult to trace the factors that affect the level of salary. In fact, in wage fixation a woman's ability in performing household chores is given higher credit. Duration of activity is also found to affect the salary domestic servants earn. The academic status of a would be domestic mostly would not be taken into account in wage fixation.

Domestic servants are not covered by the minimum wage stipulated by the state. The salary domestics earn differ from house to house and mainly depends upon the mutual (employer and employee) agreement. The nominal wage most domestics earn is far below the minimum wage given to other workers who are employed in government offices.

Domestic servants do not get a regular salary increment. An indirect way by which employers would be urged to raise the salary of domestics is only when alternative uses of time are increased. This occurs when employment opportunity for women is increased. Then the salary the domestic servants would ask for their services would rise or else the number of domestics who would be engaged in domestic service would fall causing the demand for domestics to be relatively higher than the supply. This condition will result in a rise in pay and the condition of domestics would be better.

Domestics, especially live-in ones, get boarding and lodging from their employers in addition to the salary they receive monthly. People say that if we calculate these benefits and add up to their nominal salary it will be almost the same or more than that of the minimum wage other workers in government offices receive. Due to this many people think of domestic servants as better off than others. But things are different as explained by one domestic servant:

I used to think before I joined domestic service that domestics had enough money to put aside as I thought they had no expense for food and shelter. But now I learn that things are not that way. Now I am paid 100 Birr a month (one of the highest amount domestics can earn) but it is enough for nothing, let alone supporting my family as I used to do before (Appendix E).

Though some may still think so, domestics may use the money they save, if any, during the time they are laid-off.

Although domestics frequently shift from employer to employer searching for better pay and working condition, they are less likely to get out of it. And this activity is insecure where some (21.6%) domestics wait long to get another employer while at the same time most (61.7%) employers wait for months to get a substitute.

Domestics could also be grouped into those who find their way into it willingly and those who never planned their career as a domestic. In the previous case, their parents are satisfied in their daughters being a domestic while in the latter they feel sorry.

Although most domestics claimed to have developed a smooth relationship with their employers, the most important reported reason for leaving a house was said to be employers' bad conduct.

The treatment of domestic servants differs from household to household. There are domestic servants who get favourable and fair treatment. Some employers treat domestic servants fairly and consider them as part of the family. In such households domestic servants share the same meal with the family and receive presents depending on their employers' standard of living or generosity. Besides, they allow domestic servants to attend evening classes and give regular day-off once in a month or every fortnight for about 10 hours a day.

On the other hand, there are employers who treat domestic servants harshly, and sometimes punish them severely. Some employers exercise cruel punishment; sometimes they flog or slap even forbid food to their domestic servants. Beyond these some domestic servants encounter `stoppages'. If a domestic servant breaks or loses household utensils or any other thing, some employers deduct from the domestic servant's salary an amount that equals to the estimated value of the lost item as a compensation. Other domestics face sexual harassment which may force them to give birth out of wedlock. It is also a cause for some domestic servants to be fired.

The issue of food was not a problem for most domestics although some were not provided with it on time. During festivities and holidays most domestic servants eat together with their employers. However, a word of caution is needed here and that is true answers

regarding their meal are hard to come by. For one thing, traditionally telling what one eats is considered immoral and it is regarded as a personal affair, for another they think giving such answers may put them at odds with their masters in case they get some clue.

Most (64.2%) live-in domestic servants did not disclose the state of their sleeping room and bedclothes.

Live-in domestic servants are favoured in getting day-off as opposed to their live-out counterparts as these latter ones mostly work casual work. However, during holidays even most live-in domestic servants do not get a day-off.

The majority (83.1%) of domestics had some schooling; of these most were drop-outs at the time of this study. Some of the reasons domestic servants quit school for were partly attributed to lack of enough time, money and interest. The other reason was that some employers with large family size refuse to send their domestic servants to school.

Almost half of the domestic servants welcome government intervention in regulating wages, leaves and forming of an association. Others fear government intervention might invoke disagreement with their employers. They seem to rely on the goodwill of their employers for their right.

Domestic servants are excluded from the domain of the labour law. However, the law on contract of employment in general and special provisions on domestic servants included in the civil code of Ethiopia in particular can govern them. Nevertheless, the majority of employers and domestics are ignorant of the legal provisions given to domestic servants in the Ethiopian Civil Code. The agreement between employers and employees is still based on the traditionally established practices. Of course, laws given to domestic servants have some

deficiencies. Therefore, domestic servants are getting the least legal protection compared to other groups of workers in Ethiopia.

The main thing domestics lack is job security. Almost all domestic servants are always liable to dismissals for minor mistakes. Menbere stressed now and then how difficult domestic service is.

When I was a government employee and when my boss found me doing wrong or being late from work he would give me a warning in words or in letters. If he thought it was right he would cut my salary. But here in domestic service things are different. If my employers think I am wrong, I would be fired with no compensation. I am insulted for being late from day-off, let alone making mistakes (Appendix E).

In addition to this, they can only stay on their job as long as they are not ill or do not retire. Almost all domestic servants do not get benefits such as medication, permission to attend classes, and leaves except a day-off mostly for less than half-day. Maternity leave, sick leave, mourning leave and annual leave are unthinkable for domestics. A domestic servant who became pregnant will face an instant dismissal.

Due to the negative societal perception of domestic servants, some domestics develop an inferiority complex, and do not want to stay in their occupation. The degrading position the society gives to domestics makes them change their mind to think about alternative employment or a stable marriage instead of continuing in the same employment.

The demand and supply of domestic service seem a continuum phenomenon in Ethiopia. The better standard of living of some of the inhabitants of towns who can afford for household help and lack labour saving devices for household duties justify the activity. The nature of work people perform in urban areas such as office work and comparatively more expensive outside services, have increased the demand for domestic service in towns.

Poor harvest, famine, oppressive traditional practices and imbalance in the development of rural and urban areas (where many people are attracted by the city life) also play a part. All these things combined cause people to migrate from rural to urban centres.

Once in the cities, migrants do not get the comfort they expected. Instead, they are exposed to miserable life. Girls who have not acquired any skill lack employment alternatives but domestic service.

Therefore, domestic service is providing the necessary subsistence to many women. It is also offering employment opportunity to many women who do not have access to formal sector of employment or any other self-supporting areas. At present most domestics are women. The service domestics render is very essential for many office employee women and for those who are involved in petty-trading, and for housewives.

Since no overall economic development throughout the country is expected in the near future as to cause a change in the way of living, the flow of migrants into the towns, particularly to the city is assumed to continue. And the influx of migrant women and alternateness urban-born girls together with the presence of well-off and employed middle class families, will make domestic service a valuable source of employment. Of course, in the case of our country, even people with average living standard are employing a domestic servant.

The findings prompt us to forward improvements of employer-domestic servant relationship to be the primary target of any policy action. Because a significant number of domestics find the unfair treatment they received from their employers is a major problem. For this reason some domestics develop an inferiority complex. We are also compelled to think in the broad spectrum of the very limited job opportunities domestics have other than the one they are currently employed. In a poor economy such as ours with a high unemployment rate, the

possibility of transforming domestics into other fields of activity is remote. There is a very limited pool of resources. So any pragmatic approach to the issue has to be based first on accepting the world of domestic service as a profession. This way the question is reduced to how to improve the working conditions including benefits of the domestics, their relationship with their masters, so as to stipulate specific laws that ensure the fair trial of any appeal the domestics may have.

One important side of any policy target should involve employers. They are also to be instructed on how to handle their domestic servants well; this could be done through the mass media. Specifically, the following policy interventions are proposed.

1. The Transitional Government of Ethiopia should form a committee to study the situations of domestics to make practical the promise given in the Labour Law 42/93 which states "the council of Ministers shall issue regulation governing conditions of work applicable to personal service" (Negarit Gazette No. 27 1993, p. 270). The committee should incorporate the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, The Women's Affairs sector in the Prime Minister's Office, The Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions and other concerned bodies. The committee should deal with the issue of minimum wage, hours of work, holiday leave, annual leave, meal break, rest break, medical benefits, school attendance benefits, compensation for physical injury, and also service allowance on forming an independent association. In general, the committee may seek solutions to avoid the exclusion of domestics from the Labour Law by helping the formulation of a comprehensive regulation concerning domestic servants in Ethiopia. The committee may be benefited from the experiences of other countries who have already formulated regulation for domestics.

It should also assess the considerations and recommendations passed by ILO experts (ILO 1952 Vol. 11 appendices).

2. Training centres for domestic servants should be established. The Women's Affairs Offices in Collaboration with other non-governmental organisations should coordinate efforts and provide finance for the establishment and development of the training centres. The courses in the centres, (a) should be devoted to general education which could help domestics specifically on how to read, write and perform basic arithmetic. This may encourage domestics to attend evening classes and open a way for some intelligent domestic servants to proceed to high school education and enable them to compete with other girls for higher education. And it is only then that they may have a chance to compete for better employment. (b) on the other hand, the course should focus on household work like cooking, child care, and hygiene. This should be formulated according to the needs of the prospective employers and it may also help domestics to get a better employment. (c) The third type of training these centers should give is practical instructions in activities such as sewing, carpet making and other handicraft skills. Such training may encourage domestics to think of alternative self-employment.
3. To safeguard their rights the unorganised domestics should be organised to fight the social myths. The Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions should take the initiative to organise, lead and administer domestic servants until an independent association is set for them. Eventually opening a Domestic Servants Union section under the Ethiopian Trade Union will help domestics to run their union themselves. These schemes would help domestics to handle their own affairs by fully participating in the drawing up of any policy interventions. Of course, there are inhibiting factors in

organizing domestics. Domestic servants are scattered in thousands of households and frequently change houses and generally have limited awareness regarding an association. Besides, they have difficulty to attend meetings due to time constraint and ill-will of employers for such an organization. All these difficulties may not attract a large membership. However, we feel it is time to act and the issue of domestics should be given attention.

4. To increase awareness regarding the issue of domestics the mass media (radio, television, the press) have to participate fully because until now they have failed entirely to bring the issue to public attention. This is a very practical approach before pushing hard by introducing regulations. Attention should be given to the rights and obligations of domestics and employers. The attitude of the society towards domestic service and domestic servants should be changed through education. The responsible bodies to run such education, among others, are The Departments of Women's Affairs in The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, The Ministry of Information, The Ministry of Education and The Ministry of Culture and Sports Affairs. The education would help alleviate some of the problems domestics encounter and safeguard the mutual benefits of both employers and employees. Professionals such as lawyers, sociologists and psychologists are to be the prime movers in advancing positive attitudes to smoothen the relationship between domestics and their employers. Therefore, the mass media has to give emphasis on household related issues exclusively focusing on domestic service.
5. In order to highlight our knowledge concerning domestic service and domestic servants further research on domestics in Ethiopia is needed, especially in regions where this study was unable to cover. The already conducted research has limitations

in study areas and sampling population. Areas of further research should include migration of women vis-à-vis employment opportunities, education vis-à-vis domestic service and others. Therefore, further studies are needed to understand the issue more fully both in urban areas and rural areas of the country.

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APPENDIX A
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DOMESTIC SERVANTS

We would like to thank you for your cooperation

1. Age _____
2. Educational level _____
3. Address _____ Higher (Woreda) _____ Kebele _____ House No. _____
4. Place of birth _____
5. Why did you come to Addis Ababa? _____

6. How long have you been in Addis Ababa? _____
7. How long have you been in this occupation? _____
8. Why did you join this occupation? _____
9. How many households have you been employed in? _____
- 10.
- 10.1 Do you prefer to be employed through brokers to relatives?

- 2 For your answer to question No. 10.1 please write your reason(s) _____

- 11.1 Have you ever faced a problem because of having no guarantor?

- 2 Please indicate, in order of preference, the type of house you want to be employed in.

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| A. Single (male) | D. Foreigner's residence |
| B. Single (female) | E. I have no preference as long as they pay me |
| C. Family | F. Other (please specify) |

12. What kind of working materials do you expect from the house you are going to be employed in? _____

13.1 What is the difference between the house you were employed in at first and the house you are working in now? _____

2. Why did you leave the house you were employed in before? _____

14.1 Are you a live-in or a live-out servant? _____

2 Which one do you prefer? _____

3 Why? _____

15.1 Are you married? _____

2 If yes, A) Your husband's educational level _____

B) His occupation _____

C) His monthly earnings _____

16. How is the relationship between you and your husband due to your engagement in this activity?

A) Strengthened B) Loosened C) Cause critical disagreement

D) No change E) Other (please specify) _____

17. If you are currently married and a live-out domestic servant, how do you manage the work of your house? _____

18.1 Do you have children? _____

2 If yes, how many? _____

3 What problems, has having children caused on your work and salary? _____

19.1 Please write the problems you or another domestic encountered because of pregnancy

2 Please write how you or a person whom you know solved the problem created because of pregnancy. _____

20.1 If there is another domestic servant in the house you are employed in, do your employers treat you equally? _____

2. If they don't why not? _____
3. What problems have you encountered because of the other fellow domestic servant? _____

4. What kind of relationship do you have with the co-domestic servant? _____

- 21.1 How much was your monthly salary when you first started this work? _____

2. How much do you earn per month now? _____
22. How do you collect your salary?
- A. Your employer takes the initiative to pay you monthly
 - B. Only when your employer wants to pay you
 - C. You get only when you ask
 - D. Even if you ask, your employer will not pay you immediately
 - E. When you want to leave the house you were employed in, you get the accumulated salary
 - F. After you left the house you go back repeatedly and get your salary
 - G. Your employers do not pay you due to many reasons, such as you had broken cups, vacuum flask, lost clothes etc.
 - H. Other (please specify) _____
23. What do you do with your monthly salary?
- A. You save all of it
 - B. You give all to your family
 - C. Contribute half of it to the family and save the rest
 - D. You spend all your income to raise your child(ren)
 - E. You expend the greater amount on cloth, shoes, hair oil, jewellery and save the small amount
 - F. You expend a small amount on cloth, shoes and save the greater amount and buy clothes and others to your family when you go to visit them
 - G. Other (please specify) _____
- 24.1 Do you think that the salary you get is enough? _____
2. Why? _____
- 25.1 Is there time that your employers had refused or deducted your salary? _____
2. If yes, what were their reasons? _____

26. If you ever got presents in addition to your salary, please list them out _____

27. Is the room you carry out your household duties suitable? _____
28. Please write the comfortability of utensils you work with in performing your duties _____

29. What types of services do you render in the house? _____

30. Do your employers list (specify) your tasks? _____

31. Have your employers ever told you their satisfaction in your work? _____

32. At what time do you wake up in the morning? _____

33. When do you finish work and go to bed in the evenings? _____

- 34.1 Do you have a break during the day time before or after finishing your duty? _____

- 2 If you have, for how long? _____
- 35.1 You receive household expenditure:
- | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| A. Daily | D. Monthly |
| B. Weekly | E. Both daily and weekly |
| C. Fortnightly | F. Other (please specify) _____ |
- 2 What problems have you encountered concerning household expenses? _____

36. At what times do you get your meals everyday? _____

37. Your meal time is:
- | |
|--|
| A. At normal meal times |
| B. When ever you finish your work |
| C. Whether there is work or not you don't keep normal meal times |
| D. Other (please specify) _____ |
- 38.1 Do you have a break during your meal time? _____
- 2 If yes, for how long?

39.1 Your food is:

- A. Quantitatively and qualitatively the same as employers
- B. Less in quantity but equal in quality with your employers
- C. Equal in quality but more in quantity than your employers
- D. Prepared separately
- E. You eat whatever you like
- F. Due to strict inspection you are hungry
- G. Other (please specify) _____

2 During festivities and holidays

- A. You eat left-overs of your employers
- B. You are served the same quality together with the family
- C. You eat a separately prepared food
- D. Other (please specify) _____

3 You eat:

- A. Whatever you like
- B. Only what your mistress gives you
- C. Other (please specify) _____

40.1 When you are employed in a house do you get your own sleeping room? _____

2 If not, please state the situation of your sleeping place?

3 Which one of the following is your problem?

- A. Bed
- B. Blanket
- C. Sheets
- D. Pillow
- E. All are problems
- F. Other (please specify) _____

41. If you watch television, listen to the radio, or the recorder, at what times? _____

42. When your employers believe that you make a mistake:

- A. They advise you
- B. They insult you
- C. They beat you
- D. They defame you
- E. They deduct your salary
- F. They do all the above
- G. Other (please specify) _____

43.1 When you want to leave the house you are employed in, do you give an advance notice? _____

- 2 If yes, why? _____

- 3 If no, why not? _____

44. What are the reasons which force you to leave a house?

- 45.1 Have you ever been fired out from a house without your consent? _____

- 2 If yes, what are the reasons your employers give you?

- 46.1 Whenever you are fired from a house:
- A. You get another domestic work immediately
 - B. You wait for a long time to get another work.
 - C. Other (please specify) _____
- 2 When you are laid off how do you overcome your food and shelter problems? _____

- 47.1 Do you get a day-off _____
- 2 If yes, when and on what day? _____
- 3 During your day-off:
- A. You visit your relatives or friends
 - B. You go to picnic
 - C. You attend religious ceremonies
 - D. You go to a recreation ground with your boy friend
 - E. You go to the theatre or the cinema
 - F. You go shopping
 - G. Other (please specify) _____
- 48.1 Have you ever got a leave with salary in case of unexpected occurrences such as family sickness, death, wedding etc....? _____
- 2 If you ever got a leave, for how long? _____
- 49.1 Have you ever thought of having a right to get annual leave sick leave, maternity leave, mourning leave? _____
- 2 Why? _____

- 50.1 Have you ever been injured while you were performing household duties and got compensation, or have you ever got treatment in your employers' house?

- 2 Have you got compensation for physical injury? _____
- 3 Do you know a person who has got compensation for physical injury? _____
- 4 When you fall ill, have your employers ever paid you money for medical treatment?

- 51.1 During Christmas, Easter, New Year's Day and other public holidays do you get a leave or remain working in your employer's home? _____
- 2 If you work, do you get additional pay? _____
- 52.1 Do your employer allow your relatives to visit you and be entertained in their house?

- 2 If no, why not? _____

- 53.1 Do you attend classes? _____
- 2 If yes, day or evening? _____
- 3 Please state your reason as why you choose that time.

- 4 Please state the time and place you study and do your homework. _____

- 5 If you don't attend classes, why not? _____

54. Where do you go to get legal help, whenever you encounter a problem with your employer? _____
55. Do you know whether there is a law in the Ethiopian Civil Code concerning domestic servants? _____
- 56.1 Do you support if domestic servants form an association? _____
- 2 Can you contribute membership fees every month? _____
- 3 Can you attend meetings? _____
- 4 Can you negotiate with your employers about pay and working conditions
- 5 Do you think that domestic servants can lead and administer their association? _____

- 6 Do you think that organising demonstrations may be possible? _____

- 7 Can you organise a strike? _____

- 8 Do you think that solving your problems through the association is possible? _____

- 9 Please state the advantages and disadvantages of forming an association? _____

57. The problems you encountered because you are a servant are:
- A. Being insulted and beaten by employers and their family
 - B. Forced to have sex when you do not want
 - C. Develop a feeling of inferiority
 - D. Give birth without a doctor
 - E. Forced to abort
 - F. Forced to divorce
 - G. No problem encountered
 - H. Other (please specify) _____
58. What benefits have you got because of your involvement in this occupation? _____

59. What impacts do you think has this occupation brought upon your future? _____

60. If servants' working hour, annual leave, maternity leave, sick leave, mourning leave, minimum wage are stipulated by law and domestic servants try to practice it, what problems do you anticipate? _____

61. "All domestic servants have one and the same mother" i.e. all of them have the same character. What do you think of this remark by employers? _____

- 62.1 How is your parents reaction to your being a domestic servant? _____

- 2 What are your employers attitude towards you? _____

63. What measures, do you think must the government take concerning domestic servants? _____

64. What do you want to be in the future? _____

65. Have you any other opinions concerning domestic servants and employers? _____

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

APPENDIX B
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPLOYERS OF DOMESTIC SERVANTS

We would like to thank you for your co-operation

1. Age _____
2. Occupation _____
3. Sex _____
4. Marital Status _____
5. Educational level _____
6. Address _____ Higher (Woreda) _____
Kebele _____ House No. _____
7. Total Monthly income of your family _____
- 8.1 For domestic duties a servant is:
 - A. The most important
 - B. Very important
 - C. Important
 - D. Not important
- 2 Why? _____
- 9.1 You prefer to employ a domestic servant through relatives or brokers? _____

- 2 Why? _____
- 3 What kind of guarantor do you want from your would be domestic servant? _____

- 10.1 Which type of domestic servant do you prefer? a live-in live-out. _____

- 2 Why? _____
- 11.1 Please indicate in order of preference your criteria for employing a domestic servant.
 - A. Healthy
 - B. Young
 - C. Middle aged
 - D. Has no child

- E. Loyal
- F. Not attending school
- G. Completed high school
- H. Has same language and culture as you have
- I. Has guarantor
- J. Other (please specify) _____
- 12.1 Are you willing to employ a woman who has a child? _____
- 2 If no, Why not? _____
- 3 If yes, Why? _____
13. What measures you take when your domestic servant becomes pregnant? _____
- _____
- 14.1 What types of services do you expect from your domestic servant? _____
- _____
- 2 Have you ever been satisfied with the work of your domestic servant? _____
- _____
- 3 If yes, have you ever told her about your satisfaction? _____
- _____
- 15.1 Do you give assignments to your domestic servant:
- A. Daily
- B. Weekly
- C. Monthly
- D. I don't specify her tasks
- 2 If you give assignments to your domestic servant, what is your experience of listing her tasks?
- _____
- 16.1 How many domestic servants do you have? _____
- 2 If you have more than one domestic servant who have specified tasks, what do you do to smoothen their relationship? _____
- _____
- 3 What problems have you encountered because of employing more than one domestic servant? _____
- 17.1 Do you give money for household expenses:
- A. Daily D. Monthly

- B. Weekly E. Every time your servant asks
 C. Fortnightly F. Other (please specify) _____

2 Have you had any problem with your household expenses because of your domestic servant? _____

18.1 Your domestic servant's food is:

- A. Prepared separately
 B. Prepared together with the family's
 C. You don't bother about your domestic servant's food

2 Your domestic servant eats:

- A. Only the food you give her
 B. Whatever she wants
 C. Even if you give her meals, she eats whatever she likes when you are not around
 D. Other (please specify) _____

19.1 Your domestic servant's meal time is:

- A. At normal meal times
 B. Whenever she wants to eat
 C. When she finishes her work
 D. Other (please specify) _____

2 Does your domestic servant have a break during her meal time? _____

3 For how long? _____

20.1 Is your domestic servant's daily or weekly duty fixed? _____

2 Do you think your domestic servant should work without any fixed schedule? _____

3 For how many hours does your domestic servant work per day? _____

21.1 Have you ever compared household services performed by domestic servants with that done in factories? _____

2 If yes, please state your conclusion?

22.1 On what basis do you fix the amount of your servant's salary?

- A. By inquiring about her skills

- B. By finding out the current going rate
- C. By taking into consideration her level of education
- D. Other (please specify) _____
- 2 How much do you pay for your domestic servant? _____
- 3 Do you think that the salary you pay for your domestic servant is enough? _____

- 4 Why? (please try to compare what you pay her with a factory worker's minimum wage) _____

- 23.1 Have you ever given any presents to your domestic servant?

- 2 If yes, what have you given to your domestic servant? _____

- 24.1 Do you believe that domestic servants are exploited? _____
- 2 Why do you think so?

- 25.1 How do you pay your domestic servant's salary?
- A. You take the initiative to pay her monthly
- B. Only when your domestic servant asks you
- C. Only when you have money on hand
- D. Other (please specify) _____
- 26.1 Have you ever refused to pay your domestic servant's salary? _____

- 2 If yes, why? _____
- 27.1 When your domestic servant makes a mistake
- A. You advise her
- B. You insult her
- C. You refuse to pay (or deduct from) her salary
- D. Other (please specify) _____
- 28.1 Do you allow your domestic servant's relatives to visit her and be entertained in your house? _____
- 2 Why? _____

- 29.1 At what intervals does your domestic servant get her day-off?

- 2 For how many hours or days? _____
- 3 On which day(s)? _____
- 30.1 For what reasons have your domestic servant left you in the past? _____

- 2 What were (are) the reasons why domestic servants stay(ed) for many years in your house? _____
- 3 How many domestic servants have you had? _____
- 31.1 The reason why you dismissed your domestic servant(s) is:
- A. When they make mistakes
- B. When they become pregnant
- C. When they steal
- D. When they are inefficient
- E. Other (please specify) _____
- 2 When you want to dismiss your domestic servant do you give an advance notice? _____

- 3 If yes, before how many days? _____
- 4 If no, why not? _____

- 5 When you want to change a domestic servant:
- A. You get many domestic servants who want to be employed
- B. It takes a long time to get the one you want to employ
- C. Other (please specify) _____
- 32.1 Do you think that domestic servants should get annual leave, maternity leave, sick leave, mourning leave with pay? _____
- 2 Please state your reason(s) _____

- 33.1 Do you allow your domestic servant to attend classes? _____
- 2 If yes, at what time? (day or evening) _____
- 3 Please state your reason why you choose that time. _____

- 4 Has your servant enough time and an appropriate place to study and do her homework? _____
- 5 If yes, state the place and the time. _____
- 6 If no, please state your reason(s). _____

- 7 What problems have you encountered because your domestic servant was attending classes? _____
- 34.1 Have you ever paid compensation to your domestic servant because she was injured or fell ill while she was performing your household duties? _____

- 2 Have you ever paid for the medical treatment of your domestic servant? _____

- 3 Have you ever paid compensation for her physical injury? _____

- 4 If you have not encountered such a problem, do you think that paying compensation for physical injury or for medication is the duty of employers?
- 5 Please state your reason. _____

- 35.1 Will you support if the domestic servant's working hour, annual leave, maternity leave, sick leave, mourning leave and minimum wage are stipulated by law? _____

- 2 If the above mentioned rights are stipulated by law and domestic servants try to practice it what will be the relationship between employers and domestic servants?

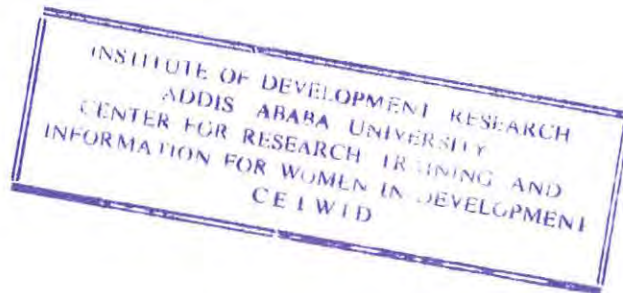
- 3 If the maximum working hour is fixed by law will you pay additional fee when they work more than the fixed hour? _____
- 4 If no, why not? _____
- 5 If yes, why? _____
- 36.1 Do you believe paying compensation for an unjustly dismissed domestic servant is necessary? _____
- 2 Why? _____
- 37.1 Do you know whether there is a law in the Ethiopian civil code concerning domestic servants? _____
- 2 If yes, is it necessary and enough? _____

- 3 Why? _____
- 38.1 Do you think forming domestic servants' association is necessary? _____
- 2 Why? _____
39. Since you are a women, how do you evaluate the overall situation of domestic servants? _____
40. "All domestic servants have one and the same mother" i.e all of them have the same character. What do you think of this remark by of employers? _____

41. What measures, do you think, must the government take concerning domestic servants? _____

42. Have you any other opinions concerning domestic servants?

Thank you very much for your time and co-operation.



APPENDIX C

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH
 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BROKERS

We would like to thank you for your co-operation.

1. Age _____
2. Sex _____
3. Marital Status _____
4. Address _____ Higher (Woreda) _____
 Locality (Kebele) _____ House No. _____
5. For how long have you been in this occupation? _____
6. At an average, how many domestic servants do you broker per day? _____

7. About how many domestic servants have been employed through you? _____

- 8.1. At an average, how much do you collect for brokerage?
 - A) From an employer _____
 - B) From an employee _____
2. Do you get the same amount of money for brokerage from each party? _____
9. At an average, how much do you earn per day through brokerage? _____
10. What problems have you encountered because of your occupation?
 - A) By employers _____

 - B) By employees _____

- 11.1. In addition to brokering domestic servants and employees, do you have another job?

2. If yes, what is it? _____
- 12.1. Do you have license to run this brokering? _____
2. If yes, how much do you pay for tax? _____
- 13.1 Have you ever been a guarantor for these domestic servants who do not have guarantor? _____
- 2 If yes, have you encountered any problem because you guaranteed a domestic? _____
-
- 14.1 Which sex takes up domestic service?
- A) Only females
- B) Only males
- C) Both females and males
2. Which sex flow more to this occupation? _____
3. You broker:
- A) Only females
- B) Only males
- C) Both females and males
15. A domestic servant's salary is often fixed by:
- A) the domestic servant herself
- B) the domestic servant's family
- C) the employer
- D) the broker
- E) both the employer and the domestic servant
16. What is the range of domestic servants' salary when they first join the world of domestic service? _____
17. What is the highest earning of a domestic? _____
18. Domestic servants usually get different amount of salary due to:
- A) their skill
- B) their conduct
- C) their level of education
- D) their health condition
- E) other (please specify) _____
-
19. When you broker what service do you give for domestic servants?

- A) Sitting room
- B) Food
- C) Lodging
- D) Both food and sleeping place
- E) Nothing
- F) other (please specify) _____

20. How do domestic servants who wait for their would be employers, overcome problems related to with food and lodging? _____

21. Domestic servants who are employed through you prefer to be:

- A) Live-in
- B) Live-out

22. Why do domestic servants often leave the house they are employed-in? _____

23. “ We do not prefer to employ a domestic servant through brokers; that is because brokers always rush domestic servants to charge the house they are employed-in so as to get brokerage fee”. What do you think of this remark by employers? _____

24. Have you any other opinions concerning you occupation - brokering employers and domestic servants? _____

APPENDIX D**The Case of Rahel Mekonnen**

When we first met Rahel she was busy with her household chores as any other housemaid is supposed to be. After getting permission from her employer, we asked Rahel all the questions that appear in our questionnaire. We asked her if she had children, although she already had told us that she was single. We did this just because it appeared in the questionnaire and because she was very young. We did not expect her to have a child, but it was only 8 days after she delivered a child.

We finished the interview, but we were very much interested in hearing Rahel's case which we think typifies the plight of women who came from the countryside. We therefore took appointment for another meeting and then departed.

On our second meeting she told us her experiences. It went something like this.

"I am 17 years old. I was born in eastern Gojjam in a village called Getem. My parents had no oxen or cow. And they were married to each other with no ceremony as they were poor. This is unlike the elaborate marriage festivities common in that surrounding. When I was only 1 year old, my mother and my father divorced. After the divorce, my mother stayed with her brother for four years. During these years, my mother worked as a day labourer, but life was hard and she wanted to flee to a town; she went to the nearest large town - Debre Markos. She took me with her, as I was her only daughter.

In Dabre Markos my mother started working for people who brew and sell **tella** (the local beer). My mother had to go through all the tiresome process of preparing **tella** all by herself (like making barley into malt; grind, soak and roast the corn; dry and grind hop; mix all ingredients; kneading dough and baking bread...) This process takes three to four days. And my mother was paid not more than two Birr for all the work she did. In that locality the grain used for preparing tella is ground by hand. And to make things worse, my mother conceived a child by a potter who died before she gave birth. My mother, while working as a day labourer, sent me to a traditional church school where I acquired basic reading and

writing skills. Then I was admitted into a public school called "Dil Betigel", but I could not continue my education beyond grade three due to lack of money.

I started work to supplement the income of my mother. I used to collect and sell dry leaves used by the local people for cooking.

The people who employed my mother wanted to send me to their relatives in Addis Ababa who then were looking for a domestic servant. My mother was asked for her permission but she declined because she wanted me to stay with her. Of course, my mother made it clear that it was only death which could take her elder daughter away from her. My uncle also wanted me to go to Addis to start domestic work. He tried to reassure my mother that he would send me to his sister who was living in Addis who would then look for a job for me. But my mother resisted.

Meanwhile, I wanted to come to Addis. This was because many of my friends discontinued their education at about grade 2 and left for Addis to look for a job.

My uncle, paying for my transport, sent me to Addis with out consulting my mother. I also wanted to come to Addis to get myself a job.

I had never seen Addis before; I only heard about it. On my way to Addis, the bus I was in stopped for lunch. I did not have enough money. Fortunately, a woman passenger who was sitting next to me took me out of the bus and invited me to lunch. After 10 hours of ride, we arrived at Addis late in the afternoon. This was in July 1993. Upon arrival at the Addis Ababa bus-stop, every other passenger took their luggage and left except me who had nowhere to go. Even the woman who invited me to lunch left for her home. Then it was only me who was left alone - terrified and worried.

After an hour of panic, a woman approached me sensing that I was new to the city. This woman showered me with a lot of questions as where I came from and why. I gave her my answers. Finally the woman asked me if I wanted to work in someone's house and I agreed.

The woman said that she herself wanted a domestic servant and took me to her home by a taxi.

With this woman taking over my worries all the fear had left me, but I was still bewildered as I was new to the city.

When we arrived at the lady's house, she asked me if I knew Addis and whether I had a relative in the city. She also asked me how much I'd want her to pay me.

I heard while I was in the countryside that domestics in Addis earned about Birr 30 - 40 a month, so I proposed to get Birr 30 a month. But my employer said it was too much and she proposed to pay Birr 20 a month. I said that Birr 20 was not enough and asked her to make it Birr 25 a month, and with this amount the employer agreed. This bargaining on fixing my wage was concluded with no one in between except my employers' children who were attending the process.

My employers, both the husband and the wife, were government employees. They had 3 children and possess their own house. When I arrived, there were only two of the children. Their elder son had dropped out of school at grade 11 and was sent - away home after quarrelling with his father. The remaining two children were students. Their mother used to come home for lunch, but their father didn't.

During the day, it is only me who keeps the house and work in the kitchen. I did all household duties except preparing the stew (wot) which most of the time the mistress did because her husband used to eat a salt-free diet. In my typical work day, I make beds, clean the house and the surrounding, bake staple food (enjera), washed clothes. I also assisted in hoeing and weeding and watering the vegetables in the garden. Sometimes I prepare the stew (wot) whenever the mistress is staying out.

As for my meal, I ate the same kind of food like my employers and as much as I like; but I used to eat alone.

For some time, I was sleeping at the bed in the room where the elder son used to sleep in before his quarrel with his father. But after this eldest son was reconciled with his father and returned home, I started to sleep on the floor on a mattress. I also shared the same room with the children.

I would not ask for my salary and my employers would not give me on time either. Sometimes the mistress would ask me what I would like to buy for myself. For a long time, I was wearing my clothes which I brought from my hometown, and any other second hand clothes which my employer gave me.

One day my employer brought me a pair of plastic shoes that cost Birr 9. On another day, I went with the mistress to the market and she bought me used up (salvage) dresses one for Birr 11 and the other for Birr 12. I also bought one sweater for Birr 7. Rahel told us that she is wearing these clothes until today.

The eldest son, after he made it up with his father, was sent to a garage for apprenticeship. When there was no one in the house except the two of us he would ask me to have sex with him. Whenever I refused, he would beat me until my face swelled. Whenever he asked me to give him lunch, and I am a bit late washing my hands, the same punches follow. One day when his mother saw the swelling on my face, she asked me what it was. I told her that it was her son who did that. However, the mistress never rebuked him. In fact even if his mother did, he would not have taken her seriously. What he feared was his father. So, the members of the family did not tell about my suffering to his father fearing that the father would send his son out again. Although I and this boy share the same sleeping room, he would not ask me for a sex during the night, fearing I might scream and his father might know about the affair.

As some point in time when every family member was out for work, the boy raped me twice. Then I became pregnant.

Rahel went on to say that when her appearance changed, the neighbours told the mistress that they were suspicious of my pregnancy. The mistress detected my pregnancy and aimed at over squeezing my labours.

I remember that once the mistress bought 50 kilos of barley and ordered her to scour and roast it so as to prepare *besso* (a local food item of roasted barley flour). When I started the working, I was vomiting continuously. Of course, being afraid of the mistress I continued with my work. At lunch time the mistress came home and gave me lunch. Later I vomited after my employer had left and I felt a severe stomach-ache. In spite of all this pain, I

continued on scouring, roasting and pounding the barely and took it to the flour mill for grinding. That night I refused to eat dinner. The daughter of my mistress told her mother that I was ill.

The next morning, the mistress gave me a traditional medicine prepared from Girawa leaves to drink before I took any food, thinking that the problem with me might be an ordinary stomach-ache. But this didn't make my condition better.

Usually, in the morning after I prepare breakfast I make coffee for my mistress before she leaves for work. Then I rush for my breakfast. But that day, the mistress told me not to make coffee; she rather took me to a hospital. There the doctors told her that I was pregnant. The mistress told me that she had already sensed my pregnancy. Then she asked me from whom I conceived, and I told her that it was from her eldest son. After this I was told to continue on my work if I feel like staying with my employers, but warned me never to "mess" with the son who had raped me.

Despite this, the mistress brought another 25 kilos of maize and ordered me to scour, and grind it. I did that too. After finishing this, I was told to wash all the clothes, including the sofa cover and the curtains. I did that. Then another order came and that was to clean all the house, and I did this too. All these I did in only two days i.e. on Saturday and Sunday. The next Monday, I was asked if I was willing to go to my home town in Gojjam. I made it clear that I did not want to go to Gojjam. Then my employer fired me with only 63 Birr as my wage for the seven months of service. I gave to that family.

I had stayed for 7 months with my employers starting from the day I set foot in Addis. I knew no other place to go to. I was therefore once again new to the city; I did not ask day-off and had no chance of visiting Addis while I was working as a domestic servant.

The only information I had was about Legehar & Kirkos Church. I took a taxi to Legehar and then asked the people in the street to show me where Kirkos Church was and finally I managed to find Kirkos Church. The day was the end of Lent. So when I arrived there the celebration was under way. After attending the ritual, I went to a woman who was selling enjera and asked her to put me up for the night, but this woman refused and advised me to go to the kebele or the church. I went to the back yard of the church and there I found a woman

who was living in the churchyard. She allowed me to stay with her. Then I stayed for 8 days with this woman but I bought my own food (bread and enjera). Whenever this woman asked me if I was pregnant, I did not give her an answer. This woman took me to my current employer and got me a job at 25 Birr a month.

After working for one month for my second employer, I told her that I was pregnant. Then came her kind words and she said, "Don't worry, you are my daughter,". She told me to go to the hospital every 15 days for check ups.

After serving this kind employer two months, I started labour and an ambulance of The Ethiopian Red Cross Society was called and took me to hospital. I delivered a child at the hospital, safely and without charge. This happened on May 9, 1994.

I now feed my child only my breast milk. I don't want any one to adopt my son. I will take care of him working the same job.

APPENDIX E**The Case of Menbere Gebremariam**

When I went to talk to her she was holding a one and a half year old child. And she is working as a baby sitter. I invited her to sit and talk to me as I wanted to hear from her as how she got into this job. She said the little baby wouldn't let her sit. Moreover, she said that her mistress would be angry if she found her talking to me. Eventually, she proposed that we go out, taking the child with us, so that the mistress would think that she was on duty playing with the child in the compound.

I started my interview as we walk along the streets. But it turned out that the baby took pleasure in playing with Menbere's hair, nose, lips, and cheek which left little chance for Menbere to speak uninterrupted. When the baby pulled her hair, or when it scratched her face, Menbere tried to stop her in vain. This menbere did with care not to annoy the baby. For the baby, Menbere was a plaything. The baby grabed member's ear lobe and lips. If Menbere held her, the baby would demand to let go. If left alone, the baby would run. Then Menbere would race to stop her. I, too, had to be fast to hold on to the interview.

Throughout the interview, she had fears that her mistress would charge her for being late.

Menbere was born in Addis. She completed elementary and high school in the capital. After completing high school, she started work in the port city of Assab in the Maritime and Transit Services Enterprise at a salary of Birr 180 a month. But Menbere said that her net monthly earnings amounted to Birr 300 when some allowances and overtime work were added. There in Assab, she owned a house and she was also supporting her family who were in Addis. Occasionally, she would send them Birr 100. In 1990 the Eritrean Peoples Libration Front (EPLF) took over Eritrea; following this Menbere was displaced from Assab. and she came here to her families.

She was idle in Addis from 1990-1992. Her clothes and her shoes were wearing out. She was also depressed about becoming dependent once again. Her family had five children other than her and their income was low. So, she thought the only chance she had was to be a domestic servant. She first started as a domestic servant handling all-round household

duties. But later she became a baby-minder. She detested the occupation and regarded it as a dreary work. She also said that the baby she was looking for was a difficult one to deal with which also made things even worse for her.

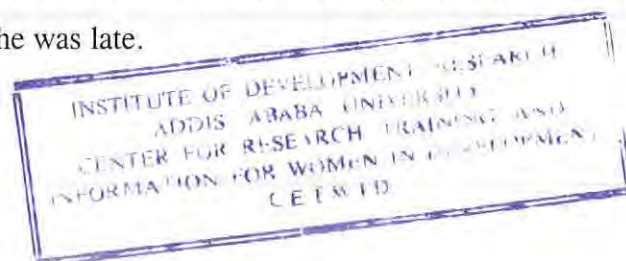
She told me about her employers-that the mistress was a housewife while her husband was an employee of an Ethiopian-based non-governmental organization.

Menbere stressed now and then how difficult domestic service is. "When I was a government employee", she recalled, "and when my boss found me doing wrong or being late from work he would give me a warning in words or in letters. If he thought it was right he would cut my salary. But here in domestic service, things are different. If my employers think I am wrong, I would be fired with no compensation. I am insulted for being late from day-off, let alone making mistakes. My employers do not want to know that I exist".

When she had her own house, she used to prepare and eat a meal she liked whenever she felt like it. But today she often missed breakfast. No one did care for her breakfast unless there was some remains of a meal. And she felt shy to ask for breakfast. The employers also never gave her lunch on time so she often went hungry.

"Working as a baby-minder is a very difficult job," she continued, "I have no rest. I have to hold the child, I have to be vigilant, always fixing an eye on her. I have to run with her although I am tired. I have to hold her, although she is heavy. At night I have to remain awake until she falls asleep. Sometimes it is difficult to know what the small baby wants as she could not talk well, if I fail to understand her, she will scrap and slap my face and grab my hair and cry. If I happen to have a family emergency, I cannot be given a leave, as it is only me who cares for her".

Menbere said that she got a day-off on a Sunday once every fortnight. During her leave, she would visit her family. She would take a leave at 8 in the morning and returned at 6 in the afternoon. She would be insulted if she was late.



Menbere also told me how she was getting along with her job in this way, "If I am insulted, I just act as though I had not heard it. Although my job is boring, I manage to hide my feelings. I have to be patient so as to secure my salary."

She further contrasted government employees with domestics by saying that the former have the chance to continue with their education in their spare time. In the case of the latter, either the masters would refuse or no time is available due to the nature of the job. She said she had no time even to look for another government employment, if any.

Menbere also said, "I used to think before I joined domestic service that domestics had enough money to put aside as I thought they had no expense for food and shelter. But now I learn that things are not that way. Now I am paid Birr 100 a month (one of the highest amount domestics can earn) but it is enough for nothing, let alone supporting my family as I used to do before. If I continued working as a domestic, I know I would not succeed in life.

If I were working in a foreigners' house, things would be much different as the payment would be high. And I do not expect any better treatment from my fellow countrymen. They always want to make me their slave. Sometimes I dream of going abroad by some miracle of God."

She spoke of her future plans by saying that she intended to be a live-out servant even if she would be required to pay for her food and shelter and to pay for her transport to get to her work. She also thought of continuing her education in the evenings as she wanted to learn the English language, or typing or if possible the computer. After attending school and improving her skills, she wanted to be employed in a government or any private business enterprise.

However, she admitted that the domestic activity is too tiresome to allow her to learn. All the same, she vowed to further her education at any cost. She intended to spend some of her income for transportation and the rest to pay for her school fee. And she intended to stay with her family for shelter and food as she thought they would cooperate with her in her effort to improve herself.

APPENDIX F**The Case of Simegne Gabrie**

Simegne Gabrie was born in a village named Abalibanos near Debre-Markos. She does not know exactly how old she is. However, she told us that she was 10 years old during Italy's occupation of Ethiopia and from this we calculated that her age was around 59 years.

The reason why we have decided to write her life history is due to the fact that she stayed in this same occupation - domestic service-for several years. Her life history goes something like this.

I married at the age of 12. Because marriage life was not comfortable, I divorced and stayed with my brother for a few years. One day, I went to the nearby market, Debre-Markos, to buy goods. After wards, on my way home, I was crossing a river. Unfortunately, all the goods that I bought were taken by the river. Afraid of seeing my sister-in-law, I returned to Debre-Markos. When I arrived at the town, I was worried because I had nowhere to go.

After hours of panic, I approached a woman and asked her if she could help to find me yegeta adar ("literally, entering into the service of a master"). The woman asked me if I was willing to come to Addis Ababa and work for a captain. I agreed to the idea. Then she took me to the captain. I made an agreement with him to perform all-around household duties and serve him as Yechin Gereede (a servant that must also serve as a bed mate for the master) and to pay me Birr 6 per month. Then I came with him to Addis Ababa.

Simegne did not know the exact time as when she came to Addis Ababa. She said "I remember when I came to the city. It was 45 years ago. At the time I came to Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian Army went to Korea (under the UN)."

Due to disagreement with the captain, I left his house after six months. After staying for a few days in the house of the captain's relative, I was employed in Wz/o Azalech's house; she brewed beer (tella). But after a fortnight, the captain knew where I was, and accused me of

stealing his household items such as clothes and jewels of his ex-wife. The police arrested me for two days. But my employer, Wz/o Azalech, told the police that I was innocent and had done nothing wrong. She also agreed to bail me. I was then released and returned to her house.

I stayed for about two years with her. I was doing all-around household duties, mainly brewing beer (tella). Particularly on Sundays, I was busy in preparing roasted barely and serving beer for the clients. Every Sunday, drivers of horse drawn cars would gather for their mutual aid association (eqqueb).

Due to work-load and getting bored, I left the house which I was employed in and rented a house with a room mate and I started doing casual work. I was paying Birr 2 for house rent. If I baked a barrel of dough into the staple food (enjera) I would be paid Birr 2 per month. If I brewed beer (tella), I would get Birr 5. Mostly, I was served my meal in the house where I worked such casual works.

After several years of leading such a life, I was employed as a live-in domestic servant around Kazanchize to render all-around household duties. I had no guarantor, but I made an oath in the name of Saint George.

Unfortunately, one day at midnight, my employer came to my sleeping room. He pointed his pistol at me and warned me not to say anything-he then forced me to have sex with him. He did what he wanted and I conceived. After months, I quarrelled with my mistress. She accused me of not being obedient to her. Due to this, I left the house and went to my relatives who were around Janmeda. But, after a few days, I was reconciled with my mistress and came back to the house where I was employed in. However, my mistress suspected me of an affair with her husband and asked me from whom I conceived. I replied to her that one day, when I was coming back from Selassie market, a person whom I did not know raped me. My mistress wanted to confirm this and asked me to swear. She forced me to confess in front of a priest by seizing the cross. I did what she wanted. After setting the matter this way, the mistress allowed me to stay with them. As I had denied to my mistress as from whom I conceived, I have not told my son who his father is. Even today I have a smooth relationship with my ex-mistress. I stayed in this house for ten years, and I was paid

Birr 10 per month. But after the husband (father of my son), passed away, I left the house and started again the casual work.

Because life was hard to continue as a casual worker, I looked for a live-in employment and got one around Kera. The man who employed me was living alone. He fired his previous domestic servant because of her pregnancy from him. After staying three months with him, I left the house; but I conceived a child from him. I went back to the house which I rented around Filwoha and started again my casual work. Here, I delivered my second son.

Afterwards, it was difficult to be a live-in domestic servant such as me as I was a mother of two children. Because of this, I continued bringing up my children working as a casual worker. Besides I was getting powder milk for my children from a charity clinic.

The rent of the house which I was living in was increased, and I was obliged to change it. I got a house with less rent at around Cherkos. I rented a house there with two roommates. The house rent was Birr 7.50 and I was paying my share of Birr 2.50 per month from the earnings that I was collecting as a casual worker. I continued supporting my children working the same things. In the meantime, a man from our neighbourhood came to my house and introduced himself to me as a Cement factory worker; he also told me his plan of marrying me. I agreed with his plan and we lived together for three years. But due to disagreement, I divorced him. Meanwhile, I gave birth to a child, but it passed away after two and half years. I am now married to another man who is still living with me.

Ten years ago the area I live in, including my house, was chosen by Kebele officials to build a house for a kindergarten and I shifted to the house where I am living now. As you see, the room is very small, but I am living with my husband and two of my children. Besides, a woman lives with us as a roommate. Because of lack of enough sleeping space, two of my children sleep somewhere outside of the room.

My husband is a daily labourer who loads sand on cars. Most of the time he does not give me money for household expenses.

My life is dependent on the earning I collect as a live-out domestic servant. Sometimes I go into a contract to brew beer (tella) for a wedding or mourning and they pay me up to Birr 50.

During performing such a casual work, I sometimes spend the night working in the same household and I am served my food there. At othertimes, I might get my lunch or dinner in the same house. Sometimes when I bake a barrel of dough into the staple food enjera, they pay me Birr 3 per month. But it is rare to get such type of casual work.

Simegne complained about the unavailability of work for live-out domestic servants. She continued, "People have stopped employing live-out domestics for baking the staple food (enjera) and for other household chores. Nowadays people use electric stoves to bake enjera. Of course, there are few people who are employing domestics and pay each time Birr 3 and a loaf of enjera (which happens every 3 or 4 days). And my livelihood depends on these."

Now after 45 years of service as a domestic servant, she has become weak. She does not know how she can support herself in the future. Her children cannot support her as they have no means for themselves. The elder son is a daily labourer while the younger has no work even if he has completed grade 12.

APPENDIX G**The Case of Shitaye Tsegaye**

Shitaye told us that she was 40 years old. But from the inconsistency in her story regarding her age it was possible to guess that she was between 40 and 45 years old. Her life history began like this:

I was born in Southern Gonder in a village named Simada. My parents were farmers. Before I came to Addis Ababa I was helping my mother with cooking, cleaning, collecting firewood fetching water and grinding cereals. I was also helping my family in weeding, harvesting crops and herding cattle.

In that locality, girls get married at an early age. But I did not marry until I was over sixteen and people in the area considered me as an unwanted woman. After they heard many gossips, my parents arranged for me a marriage to a man who was an employee of a farmer. I married him with very little ceremonies, as we were poor. I went to my husband's village on a mule back, but after ten days I came back to my family. The reason was that I did not like my husband's village. The union that I had with him stopped from that day on wards and I continued living with my parents. Unfortunately, I fell in love with a boy who was our neighbour and got married to him. However, because of his irresponsible character we were unable to live together and I divorced him. Then I came back to my parents. I had conceived a child from my second marriage and I delivered the baby in my parents' house. However, the baby died immediately.

Months later, I got married to my third husband who was living in a place called Gayint. I took some amount of crops to my husband's house. Because he was poor we used the crops that I took for our daily consumption. When it was finished there was nothing to eat. Due to this, I came back to my family. Like before I was pregnant and gave birth to a child, but it died after six months.

In addition to my unlucky marriages, my mother passed away and my father got married to another woman. I disagreed with my stepmother and hated living in the area. So, I decided

to leave my village, and then I came to Addis Ababa to look for an employment- domestic service.

I do not remember how long ago I came to the city. The only thing I remember is, how and with whom I came to Addis Ababa. I came with my three friends. All of us had decided to escape from rural life. However, we did not have enough money for transportation. So, we decided to make part of our journey on foot, and started the journey. After three days, crossing the low-land area of Guder and the river Abay, we reached Dejen in Gojjam. My brother in law (my second husband's brother) was with us. From Dejene to Addis Ababa we took a bus.

When we arrived in Addis Ababa, my brother-in-law took us to a family he knows, and we stayed there for sometime. There, I met my second husband who had come to Adis Ababa earlier to me. So, after sometime, my ex-husband found me domestic work around Lidta area with Birr five per month. Each month, he was taking my salary from my employers. During my day-off I was visiting him and also when I was laid- off, I used to stay with him. Unfortunately, I became pregnant and I told this to him. However, he became annoyed and warned me not to come near him. Besides, my employers knew about my condition and fired me. I had no where to go but returned back to my village. I started my journey back home. However, I was badly in need of money for transport. So, when I reached Debre-Markos I searched for an employment and got a domestic service with Birr four per month. After three months of service I collected my salary and went to my village. But my stepmother was not willing to accept me. All my relatives, except my brother, stood by her side. My being pregnant out of wedlock was a shame for all my family. At that time I was seven-month pregnant. My elder brother gave me shelter and then built a hut for me; I gave birth to a son there but again it died after seven months.

After the death of my son, I decided to come back to Addis Ababa. I told this to my elder brother and he gave me transportation money. Fortunately, my uncle was on his way to Addis Ababa. I came with him up to the town of Dejene. But, he stayed behind with his luggage at Dejene. Leaving him there, I came to Addis Ababa alone, but I had no where to stay up until I got an employment-domestic service. Before I arrived at the bus stop in Addis, I had told to one passenger who was beside me that I had no place to stay and a guarantor to be a domestic servant. The one I told my problem too introduced me with

another woman named Fekedu. Wanting to know why and where I came from, the woman asked me many questions. While we were talking, she told me that she knew Ato worku-a man from my birth place. I told her that I too knew him. Then she took me to her house which was found at Bekilo- Bete area. She found me an employment-domestic service, and became my guarantor for one time.

I stayed as a live in domestic servant for four years. I was employed in many households but I do not remember how many households I have worked for. I have been in Nefas-Silk, Bole, and Lam-Beret areas. The longest time I stayed in one house was two years, while the shortest was two months in another house. Another thing what I remember is that my employers whom I stayed for two years changed their house. It was far from the center of Addis Ababa. They asked me to go with them. But I did not agree with their idea. Because of this they refused to pay me my two years' salary out of which I bought only one dress.

I used to get employment through a man whom I knew and I was earning Birr ten per month, but at the end of each month my employers would deduct my salary for a number of reasons such as breaking utensils, losing household materials etc. Because of this I was unable to buy myself a dress. Besides this, many boys who were found around my employment area were hunting me for sex. Because of these, I became fed up of domestic service and was searching for ways and means to be relieved from the job. I told to my guarantor what problems I encountered and my dissatisfaction with the work. He asked me if I wanted to get married. I agreed with his idea and got married to Feleke Gorfu, who was employed in Coffee Board during the day worked as a janitor and in a private house at night. Twenty years ago, I started living with my husband in Kirkos area.

After my marriage I continued working as a live-out domestic servant to support my husband's meagre salary. Usually, I would bake the staple food enjera, brew beer (tella), wash clothes, clean houses and sometimes take a contract for casual work. I would charge Birr 3 per month for baking a barrel of dough into the staple food enjera; Birr 5 for cooking wot (stew). For brewing beer (tella) for a wedding or a mourning, I would get up to Birr 40, and Birr 25 for preparing 17 kilos of hot pepper. But I was not happy with my married life. My husband did not give me money for household expenses. Rather, sometimes he would ask me for money and when I refused he would beat me. Due to these, I divorced him and became a live-in domestic servant. After two months, I was reconciled with my husband and

returned home. The reason that obliged me to come back home was my second child's hand was injured and I wanted to take care of him. After I was reconciled with my husband, I gave birth to my third and fourth children. I was running my career-domestic service-even if I became pregnant, and I had worked with my child on my back.

Seven years ago my husband committed suicide. Thereafter, all the responsibility of the family fell on my shoulder. At present our living depends on the Birr 30 pension of my husband that I receive regularly. I supplement that by the earning that I get as a live-out domestic servant. Usually, I work casual work in houses that are found in my locality (kebele). Sometimes I would go as far as Nefas-silk and Lam-Beret when I get work through persons whom I know.

Shitaye complains about the non-availability of work for live-outs in the last three years, especially during the rainy seasons. She said, "People have stopped employing live-out domestic servants for baking enjera; instead they use electric stoves".

The room shitaye now lives in is very small. She and her late husband together with their children were living there. The room was given to her husband from his relatives, but after the revolution the kebele officials ordered them to pay Birr 4.50 rent per month. But, due to lack of money, they could not pay the requested amount for rent. So, the kebele officials partitioned the room and rented one part to another woman and left the rest to them. Now she is living in this very small room sleeping on a very small bed which she used to sleep on together with her three children. She goes in and out through the front room which is rented to another person. Since she does not have a kitchen, she buys a loaf of enjera with 80 cents and cooks wot (stew) using a kerosine stove. All the sewerage from the surrounding pass in front of her door. Besides, she is not in good terms with her neighbours, including the one who shares the room. All these problems are pushing her to change the room she lives in now. But, the kebele officials have told her that they could not do anything to her. So, getting another room seems impossible to her.

while, the owner of the household told me that his plan was to live abroad with his children. Then I left his house and went back to the house where Hiwot was employed in.

After staying for a few days, I got employed around Lam-Beret through Hiwot's relative. I started getting Birr 40 per month. My employer was a divorcee named Gebremariam who was living with his five children. His earning came from his hotel which was found around Yared school. I was responsible for all household duties. One day, the man who employed me forced me to have sex with him and I became pregnant. After six months, I told him that I was pregnant by him, but he denied his act and fired me. I had nowhere to go. By chance, I got a man from my birth place and he took me to a man whom he knew. I stayed there for sometime. When my delivery day approached, I told to the man whom I was with that I was pregnant from my ex-employer. Because I was late in telling him, he was annoyed and told me to leave his house. I went to Hiwot's aunt. There, before seven months ago a traditional midwife helped me in my delivery. I gave birth to a child. I stayed for three months in the house in which I delivered the child.

I asked my child's father through persons he knew to accept the child as his. But he refused and made an oath in the name of God that the child was not his.

Then I came here and was employed with Birr 35 a month. You see, in the previous house that I was employed in, I was getting Birr 40 per month, but now I have gone down and get Birr 35 due to the fact that I am a mother domestic servant. I am employed in a widower's house; he has five children. He buys clothes and milk for my child.

I usually rise at 5 in the morning to prepare breakfast for the family. Then I make beds, clean the floor and then prepare lunch. After serving lunch, I wash dishes and utensils and prepare dinner. I go to bed between 10-11pm. Once a week, I wash clothes. I also I brew beer (tella) sometimes. I collect my salary every month. I rarely send money to my parents. In the future, I want to get married and have my own house, if possible. If I face problems because of my child, I will send it to my parents.